

THE CONVERSION OF HAMILTON WHEELER

PRESCOTT LOCKE



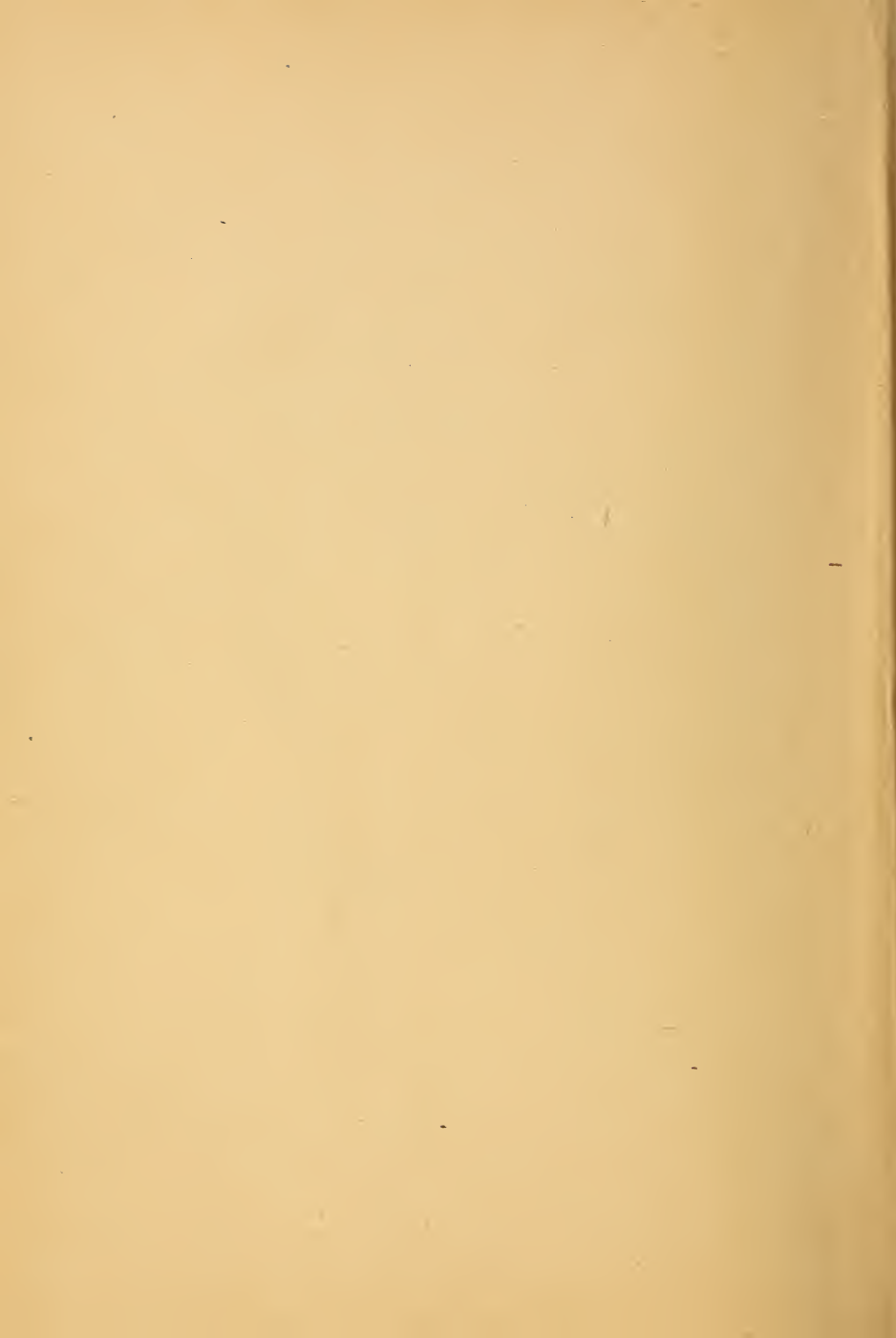
Class BR 110

Book L6

Copyright N^o

COPYRIGHT DEPOSIT.





The Conversion of
Hamilton Wheeler

A Voluntary Contribution to The National Mental
Hygiene Movement

THE CONVERSION OF HAMILTON WHEELER

A Novelette of Religion and Love
Introducing
Studies in Religious Psychology and Pathology

by
PRESCOTT LOCKE

*"Some books are to be tasted,
others to be swallowed, and some
few to be chewed and digested."*

—FRANCIS BACON

THE PANDECT PUBLISHING COMPANY
BLOOMINGTON, ILLINOIS

1917

BR110
.46

COPYRIGHT 1917
BY PANDECT PUBLISHING COMPANY

ALL RIGHTS RESERVED

AUG 27 1917

©CL.A470797

no. 1.

DEDICATION

TO THOSE intrepid pioneer reformers of this world, who possess the capacity, the unswerving independent deliberation, the perseverance, the courage of their conscientious convictions, and that greater virtue of fortitude and unselfish heroism which is necessary to give dauntless expression to that, which they have become convinced, in working out social problems, will help free Society from diseases that afflict it, this little work is humbly dedicated in meagre recognition and appreciation.



The Conversion of Hamilton Wheeler

TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION

	Pages
Voluntary contribution to the Mental Hygiene Movement. Chief objects of the movement. Serious national handicap of mental unsoundness. New York State Charities Aid Society's epitome of what each person can do in the Mental Hygiene Movement. Difficulties of the present work. Need of an "Uncle Tom's Cabin" by Revivalism. No pretensions as a work of fiction. Excesses which led author into print. On religious insanity reports from different parts of the United States. The Buchenau murder case. Why harmful religion is a great harm. Slowness of Civil Authorities to take action in advance of wildest excesses and irreparable damage. Increase of taxes incident to increase of insane in institution custody, which in New York State has increased twice as fast as the population. Political handicaps of a Democracy. Present day Evangelists operating with eyes open and regardless of direful results. Author's acknowledgments to Author Authorities. Policy to limit criticism to merit or demerit of text contents.....	19-27

CHAPTER I.

Introduction to the star character. Well born and ideally reared by an ideal mother. Reflection of ideal parental example. Ideal residence location. Early intimacy with the Hunts. Superior educational advantages. Removal to Van Cortlandt Park section of New York. Change to a boy's school. Athletic sports and physical development, followed by sedentation. Over stress of school work. Perplexity on choice of alternatives. Anxiety to meet economic stress.....	29-36
---	-------

CHAPTER II.

Acceptance of invitation to attend revival. Religious bringing up. Hamilton's religious status. Primary attitude toward Evangelist. Ludicrous impressions. Contrast between Evangelist and Rector. Aftermath agitation and emotion. Revival experience of hymn momentum abruptly ending in an immobile state, coupled	
---	--

The Conversion of Hamilton Wheeler

Pages

with intense excitement. Emotionally rocked to and fro by vicissitudes of the service. Production of tensional state followed by a glow of passionate emotion. Impelling character of the besetting emotional impulses. Outward expressions of release of pent up emotions in the departing congregation. Exuberance of erotic emotions among young people. Indecorous conduct. Coquetry. Initial experience of unsophisticated suitors. Mutual yielding to amorous emotions of religious origin. Mental confusion over relation of religion and lust, and over irreconcilable contrasts between Evangelists and other clergy. Remorse and anxiety engendered by and disturbance of mind following revival experience.....37-45

CHAPTER III.

Visit of Mrs. Wheatcroft. Outpouring of self-made troubles. Example of feminine discontent and unrest. Economic problems born of war conditions. Deliberations on the subject of divorce. Economic relations of wedded life. Example of bad influence on children. Dissatisfaction over age disparity. Differences in taste. Self-love and self-pity. Vanity. Hatred born of dissatisfaction. Super-egoism. Expression of religious feeling. Expression of unmeant vituperation. Unchristian-like acts of the Christian contrasted with the ethical behavior of the unbeliever. Dangers of suffrage movement. Selfish character of religious expressions. Ritualism and Evangelism contrasted. The sense of religious experience as an emotion. The hyperesthetic and hysterical type portrayed in Mrs. Wheatcroft. Hereditary effect of inebriety. Political, social, and domestic expression of revival emotionalism. Mrs. Wheatcroft's besetting sin. Impatience, unendurance, and intolerance. Hallucinations of persecution. Sudden changes of emotional expression. Argument and reason of no avail.....46-57

CHAPTER IV.

Hamilton exhibits restlessness and goes out for a walk. Meets Tom Young. Yields to pressure to attend revival again. Acquaintanceship with two girls. Fixation of the attention by hymns. Dogmatic and emphatic

The Conversion of Hamilton Wheeler

Pages

affirmations of Evangelist. Fatigue following Evangelist with eye and ear. Spellbound rigidity of auditors. Struggle for venting of emotions while yet transfixed. Progression of emotional stress. Breathlessness. Contagious influence of movement forward crystallized by oral suggestions and example. Card signing. Exit from Tabernacle. Accompanying the girls home. Exhibition of amatory excitement. Transition of religious emotion. Complete surrender to temptation. Remorse, anxiety. Hamilton's return home. A sleepless night. Irritable repulses. Change in disposition and moral demeanor. First interest in girls noticed. Complete change in character to the typical features and attributes of the hyperesthetic....58-67

CHAPTER V.

Previous worry over effects of overwork augmented by second revival experience, causes Mrs. Wheeler to consult Dr. Austin. The Evangelist's motive. Pathological effects produced. A social and physical crime. Effects depressive, followed by exaltation reaction and motor release. Hesitation to believe wrong could come from religious practices. The converted remain slaves to the church. Ignorance of crowd psychology. Production of Hyperesthesia. Permanent reduction of resistance. Advice to intercept the follow-up agents. Disturbance of mental balance and poise. Instability the forerunner of manic-depressive insanity. Exemplified production of biologic tetanus. Reaction tetanies of Evangelist's bombardments. Confusion and defect of ideation from excessive sense stimuli. Mental confusion, discontinuity, and in-coordination, from jumbles of vagaries and mysticisms. Perception in inverse ratio to emotional expression. Falsifications of ideas from intense emotions of sorrow and fear. Confusion and defect of perceptions from intense emotions. No religious significance of surrender of conversions. Other relations. Pure perception. Motor disproportion of perceptive excesses. Thrills. Evangelistic instability and emotionalism. Produced predisposition. Relegation of hysteria to faith-healing cults. Hysteric characteristics. America, the land of revivals and neurasthenia. Co-relation between corruption, vices, and religious emotionalism.

The Conversion of Hamilton Wheeler

	Pages
Emotion a physical manifestation. Causes. Disequilibrium between mental and physical functions. The simplest form of response phenomena. Inequalities. Fear of knowledge disturbing to beliefs. Progression because of survival.....	68-86

CHAPTER VI.

Late retirement necessitated by mental disability in school-work. A sleepless night. An intruder in the apartment. Captured at the pistol's mouth. Identification of Tom Young. Disarming. The wrong apartment. The heart to heart talk. The product of multiple conversion. The religiousness of the criminal. The yeggman oath and its sanctity. A yegg from youth. The confession. The confidential talk. The conditional freedom. Yegg fraternal benevolences. Yeggmen's political and social relations. Gangmen's political functions. Obligations of yeggs. The solemn oath. The departure. The aftermath prostration. The verification of the paradoxical relation of religion and crime.....	87-99
--	-------

CHAPTER VII.

Wanderlust possesses Hamilton to seek another revival adventure and a companion. Beating the rush to the Tabernacle. The intimidation of the unchurched. Energy release of singing. Respiratory conformation to hymn rhythm. Disturbance of respiratory rhythm. The rapid fire of the Evangelist. Intimidation by pointed invective. Oppression and disturbances of breathing and allied symptoms. Emotional depression. Symptoms of respiratory and general distress. Increase of frequency of Evangelist's bombardment. Helplessness to accommodate to the imposed conditions. Varieties of emotions successively excited. Universal condemnations. Sensations of anguish, giddiness, and faintness. Stumbling and sobbing breathing. Mental clouding. Drunken symptoms. Final collapse. Removal to the Tabernacle hospital. Accompanied home in taxi. Dr. Austin called next morning. The recital. General symptoms of hyperesthesia.....	100-109
--	---------

CHAPTER VIII.

Perfect physical and mental specimen of young manhood at beginning of Revival. Temporary depletion only,	8
--	---

The Conversion of Hamilton Wheeler

afforded the necessary susceptibility to conversion. The man-destroying revival crime. Induced super-susceptibility to future religious emotionalism. Human amenability to crowd psychology which caters only to the senses. Mad stampedes of animals. Stamping of human crowds to mad acts. Wars, outrages, and crimes of fanaticisms. Agitators rather than the crowds to blame. Need of severe penal laws. Erroneous concepts of products of mental function. Thought not a spiritual or divine entity, not a projection but a reaction. Wilfulness versus the will. The will, consciousness, and attention. Misinterpretation of physical-motive force. Violence of impulsive, rash, and criminal acts. Insane exhibition of strength. Violent stimulus of evangelistic effects. Peculiarity of conversion. Its vicarious expression of vented energy. The determining direction of fixed delusions. The influence of simple suggestion on the converted. Delusion-attained by prolonged fixation of religious ideas. Veritable delusions of religious convictions and "experiences." Puberty the predominant age of conversions. Induced delusion of sexual impulse. Special susceptibility and liability of children to emotions. Low tissue density as the basic factor. Taking advantage of the young. Religion and lust. Special susceptibility of adolescence. Children should keep away from revivals. Motive to inculcate convictions and prejudices when least competent to judge. Theologian Professor advises harvest of the young. Medical authority warns against tampering with emotions of youth, lest religious fervor reappears as sexual immorality. Leading position of the Evangelist in American Churchdom. Complete surrender of clergy to the Evangelist. Morbidity of any action that disturbs the equilibrium. Subnormal status of what passes as supernatural. Morbidity and viciousness of all that unbalances and disturbs mental equilibrium. The normal man well balanced and self-controlled. Instability increases when cases progress despite treatment. Super-sensitiveness and reaction violence typical expressions of tissue softness of sedentary habits. Restlessness. Paroxysmal and spasm-like reaction. Prone to tetany. Tissue density basis of emotion. Emotionalism

The Conversion of Hamilton Wheeler

Pages

a status of incapacity, not of excess of motor force. Exhausting waste of energy. Convulsions, a status of broken integrity of tonic contraction. Absurd definitions of emotion. Impulsive expressions of emotion. Explosive attributes. Antithesis of thought and emotion. Emotion and digestion. Piety and biliousness. Intelligence a product of nutrition. Emotional discontinuity of thought. Delusional index of lunacy. Morbid manifestations not Providential or Divine. Revivals make business for the saloon and brothel, and inmates for insane asylums. The Evangelist the prototype of the charlatan. Contagion of emotion from the Evangelist. Designed accentuation of emotion for contagious effect. Evangelist pays the price of his own emotionalism. Effect of physical fixation on its mental reproduction. Extraordinary methods of holding attention of congregation. Object and effect of great revival choirs. Copyrighted hymns of highest emotional quality. Fixed eye and bated breath. Importance of stimulation minus reaction pending outburst of the overwrought. The silent struggle kinship to stage hypnotism. The false interpretation.....110-133

CHAPTER IX.

Determination of material basis of revival operations. Revivalism mass hypnotism, the audience the crowd, subject to crowd impressions and contagion. Low level of crowd psychology. The individual swallowed up in the crowd. Evangelical adaptation of hypnotism. Its success and harm. Importance of direction of effect on the will. Religious versus medical hypnotism as to breaking down the will. Revival conversion an introduction into the subnormal, not the supernatural. Emotion revered as religious experience. Over-reaction of low density tissues of the organs of special sense. Contractile tissue tetany from violent sense impressions, as physical basis of subconscious states. Analogous phenomena of hypnotism. Inhibition of deliberation. Typical cases analogous to hypnotised subject. Individual subordination to crowd consciousness. Catalepsy. Impulse untempered or controlled by reason productive of criminal and unethical conduct. Dissociation of conscious-

The Conversion of Hamilton Wheeler

	Pages
ness. Double personalities. Subconscious awe and veneration leading to inhibition. Theory of pan-organism seat of mentality. Recapitulation. Excessive recoils. Motor expression precedes deliberation. Hyperesthetics and hysterics in general are rash actors. Examples of undeliberated behavior.....	134-147

CHAPTER X.

All factors of mental morbidity predispose to religion. Exemplification of the great war. Emotional release of tetany of grief. Emotional grief merges into emotional religion. Emotional identity of various types. Pan-emotionalism of conversion. Morbidity of process of religious conversion. Artificial mental aberration. Morbid evangelical exciting cause superimposed upon known predisposing causes of morbidity. Subconscious automatons of perfect military machines. Absence of morality of subconscious subwaking ego. Psychology of the Germans in peace and war. Criminal attributes of the subconscious automaton as illustrated in the German soldier. Equalled only by the subject of religious zeal and fanaticism. History's chamber of horrors. Emotionalism, the bane of American politics. Duty of medical profession. Governments, like crowds, less moral and ethical than individuals. Physical basis of decadence of princely and aristocratic governments. Breaking the will of soldiers. Basis of brutality. Confusion a factor of mental deficiency. Importance of mental differentiation and definition. Deceptions and hallucinations. Discrimination. Importance of fluctuations of superficial circulation. Analogy of hyperemia and flush of religious exaltation. Religious hallucinations. Too sacred for reason. Evangelists as champions of public morals and uplift. The relation of the cardinal sins to historical religion. Dancing as a religious rite. Christian Science. Discussion of the physical basis of revival hymnology. The oxygen factor. Choir psychology. The rhythmic factors. The emotion as an effect. Collective and universal emotion. Psychology of repetition of affirmation. Motor element of emotion. The singing congregation. Repetition of recitation. Psychology of hymn verses and music. Large choirs of revivals. Elements of men-

The Conversion of Hamilton Wheeler

Pages

tal sweeping. The Choir Master's spin of the human top. The explosive instability goal of Evangelist. Special susceptibility of the musical to evangelism. The unemotional not musical. Evil psychic influence of evil Virtuosi. Former proscription of music in churches. Superficial innocence of singing hymns. Supposition of wholesomeness of everything presented in the name of religion. The curse of what unfits man and is not recognized as such. Present demands for supreme fitness. The military unfitness of the hyperesthetics from various causes. Inability to withstand modern warfare. Early mental collapse of excessive reactions and lack of stamina. Cowardice of innate timidity. Lack of resolution and courage. Unreliability of natural disloyalty and treacheries. Restlessness and discontent as elements of disaffection. Vacillation. Unscrupulousness and malingering. Unreliability of bad veracity. Incompetence of general weakness of character. Incapacitation by insomnia. As a factor of mental breakdown. Incapacity to conform to mass action. Similarity to revival order of symptoms. Wisdom of Gen. Funston in prohibiting emotionalizing of troops. Many rendered militarily unfit by revival.....148-179

CHAPTER XI.

Dr. Austin introduces his fellow alienist: Dr. McLean. Inordinate cost of maintenance of institutional insane, and the great tax infliction on an innocent public made necessary by permitting the production of human derelicts. Necessity for allaying all apprehension of patient. Early American Revivals. Present Evangelist simulates the insane Davenport. Complete and careful examination of the entire body and physical reactions. Mental and emotional causation of most serious diseases. Sad error of public concept that diseases of mental causation are necessarily trivial, or are curable simply by change of mental attitude or religious belief. Danger of inciting fear, especially in children. Craving for rest and peace of converts leads them to Faith-healing cults in large numbers. Prospects of benefit from faith-healing. Hypnotic revival methods most potent, yet less so than those of subwaking hypnotism. The effect of fear and terror

The Conversion of Hamilton Wheeler

Pages

in vacating the blood vessels of the superficial tissues and thus asphyxiating them. Ignorance of faith-healers. Characteristics of modern Evangelists. Ear-splitting violence and reaction traumatism. The sense of conviction of sin one of depression. Sunday accredited the most successful sin convincer. Remarkable capacity of sense organs to withstand violence. Reaction tissues beyond tetanized by same degree of sensorial violence. Physical basis of abeyance of deliberative faculties from violence of sense impulses. Separation of upper and lower levels of consciousness. Dual personalities. Intercommunication of separated egos. Latent impressions of subconscious groups. The planchette and hypnotism instruments of exploration. Law of inverse proportion of emotion and reason. Great crime of fostering emotion and inhibiting intellection. Especially pernicious to Democracies. Especial need of reason in Democracies. Menace to communities of individuals bereft of reason. Amenability of the over-credulous to the sway of demagogues. Especial susceptibility of women. Impulsive loquacity. Intuition pictured as a divine faculty. Parallelism of intuition and impulsive expression. Analogy of the alcoholic. Role of immature perceptions in subsequent deliberation. High velocity of transmission of violent sense impressions of defective mentality. Imperfect perceptions of every imperfect deliberation are provided to interact with and modify future mental operations. The same inherent defect is responsible for imperfectly modified perceptions and imperfect intellection utilizing such imperfect perceptions. Either acting singly produces the same effect.....180-206

CHAPTER XII.

Indivisibility of the attention. Integrity of the attention dependent upon unity. Functionally incapacitated to the extent that it is broken or dismembered. Clouding of the mental processes corresponding to confusion or distraction of the attention. The attention the center of convergence. Concentration of the attention a focus and unification of attention. Serious import of mental diversions and digressions. Mental acts composites of current sense impressions and past ones

The Conversion of Hamilton Wheeler

coordinated. Virtue of singleness of theme, of the attention, and of consciousness. The vice of disruption. Short-comings of weak sense impressions attaining only subconscious levels. Conscious representations dependent upon dynamic reaction force. Weak representations attain outward expression during periods of abeyance or inhibition of stronger ones. Conscious mentality the group occupying the attention. All conscious thoughts attain head inversely to the exclusion of others. Latent influence of subconscious groups. Abnormal supremacies of subconscious groups in outward expression. Objective and subjective operations. Personifications and deifications of the mind as an entity, instead of a function. Confusing terminology of "subconscious mind" and "objective and subjective mind." Non-recognition of representations of inadequate strength. Misinterpretation of subconscious representations first commanding the attention. Forcible impression of false perceptions and irrational ideas. Confusion of perception and incoherence of ideas. Discontinuity of thought. Equal applicability to the mind of the laws of matter. Unification and integrity of integration. The mind as a functional product of animal matter. Dependence of progress in morbid psychology upon recognition of underlying factors. New emphasis upon the fact of unity in mental functions. Special sense hyperesthesia as a typical factor. Amnesia as a developed type. Producing by shock and traumatism. The mental levels of the conscious and subconscious groups. Superior and inferior standards. Weak perceptions not reaching the conscious attention not modified and qualified. Subconscious impressions gained by singing hymns. Insidious subconscious impressions. Process of "queering." Subconscious opinions subordinated to full conscious reason. On freewill. Disciplinary repression to subconsciousness. Blindness to sequence. Subordination by subconscious automatonization. Potency of influence of multiplicity of repetition of subconscious impressions. Exemplification in children of unconscious impressions. Religious applications and uses in competitive applications. Possibility of great wrongs. German applications. Subordination of the question

The Conversion of Hamilton Wheeler

Pages

of prerogative. Intrigue versus fear. Religious hysteria and fanaticism menace of peace. Motive for crime. Religious devotion parallel with status as menace to community. The millenium when religion shall be purged of supernaturalism. The religion and institutions of the future. The new lectureship teachers. Disappearance of hyperesthesia and anti-social classes with the establishment of institutions of this world to supersede the degradations of present religions of supernaturalism. Disappearance of international conflicts.....207-230

CHAPTER XIII.

Drunken delirium producible in alcoholics by violent emotion. Craving alcoholic liquors following strong emotions. Pathologic emotions morbid exaggerations of preambles of normal acts. Important role of alcohol in history of all religions. Miraculous creation of wine by Jesus. Excesses of the Agapae. Free use by church leaders. Renewal of religious ecstasies by alcohol and narcotics. Sensation suspended or extinguished by ecstasy. Visions, hallucinations, and convulsions in morbid train of events. Collateral symptoms. Bellicose methods of hysterio-emotional individuals. Appeals to emotions and passion instead of reason. Conviction by affirmation, repetition, and emphasis instead of by argument. As demagogues and social parasites. Role of alcohol in production of emotionalism. The campaign of education of the medical profession. The elimination of the sensorial causes. Religion as a cause of insanity. Hindering intellectual development and weakening moral character by beliefs that prohibit intelligent inquiry. Beliefs that transcend and contradict reason leading to extravagant delusions. Instability of mind and overthrow of mental balance by religious emotional excitement and extraordinary emotional displays. Ultra-violent evangelism. Sensorial violence and exhaustion. Obscurantism and mysticism, bewilderments and distractions. Violent repressions. "Blessed are the intoxicated." Analogy of religious and alcoholic intoxications. Comparisons between alcoholic and religious insanity. Religion separate from morals. Defeat of mental coherence and coordination by relig-

The Conversion of Hamilton Wheeler

ious obscurantism, obfuscation, and resulting bewilderment. Sanity as a state of successful adaptation and adaptability. Man's duty to be true to knowledge and fact. Obsessions of false ideas beginnings of unbalanced states. Falsification of senses. Uncontrolled imagination and love of illusion leading to delusion. General expressions of religious intolerance. Fanaticism a degree of insanity. Supernaturalism fosters obliviousness to material fact. Belief in the unreal destroys adaptability to the real. Abolition of differentiation by teaching that the tangible is intangible. Lack of initiation due to crushing independent thought by fear. Weakness of independent thought due to persecution of honest individual opinion. Elimination of those who do not progress. The elimination of the fanatical Turk. Results of false perception and conception, of emotionalism, hysteria, fanaticism, and eroticism fostered by religion. All higher mentality dependent upon elaboration. Sustained and complex deliberations necessary to ripe judgment. Ethics and morality versus Emotionalism. Criminal liability of the political and industrial instability of emotional derelicts. Folly of religious emotionalizing of industrial towns. Danger of trusting and obeying the emotions. Crowd emotion of riots. Emotionalism not productive of good citizenship. Fixed ideas of blind dogma. Obsessions supplant reason. Identity of reason and morality. Emotional control of men, women, and children. The terrible price paid for impassioned emotional excitations. Susceptibility not a solace. Religiousness of innate criminals. Predisposition of alcoholics to convulsive conversions. Affinity for Christian Science. Emotional contagion from Evangelist. Evangelism for broken-down sports. Pathology of intensive effort on incoherent and incoordinate narrative. Unbalance from defeated attempts to reason out the unreasonable of Scripture. Obfuscation and obscurantism fatal to acute and subtle minds. The insult to church members of the revival method of recruiting its membership. Broken wills, enfeebled volitions, emotionalism, and proneness to insanity of the victims of the revival harvest. First steps toward the discoordination of the unbalanced state. Paradox of the church as an institution

The Conversion of Hamilton Wheeler

Pages

of ethical culture. Religion, a foe of Republics. Church allegiance stronger than political. Breaking down of separation of Church and State in America. Unwise repressive laws of ecclesiastical political prestige. Vices of ecclesiastical bodies. Reactionary supremacy. The position of the modern Protestant minister. The restraint exercised by the body politic. The group inferior to the individual minister. The revival the product of the group. How long will it continue? The analogy of the Evangelist and the butcher. The lazy Pastor's method. Religious preferment. The un-American premium on creed and affiliation. Opportunity open for reform. Changes in the capacity of priest and minister. Opening as secular teachers. Need of universal teaching of subjects of higher education. Prostitution of religion to ulterior commercial ends. Religious hypnotism used to separate individuals from their fortunes.....231-261

CHAPTER XIV.

Attainment of the goal. Hamilton's triumph in overcoming all drawbacks and graduating. Mrs. Wheatcroft coming to her senses. The disappointment of ambitions of vanity. Late realization that her apparent admirers had not honorable intentions. Religious expression of self-love. Egoism. Dr. Austin admits the real gravity of the ordeal through which Hamilton had now safely passed. Religious indifference where harm is not involved. Necessity of instruction to permit of proper interpretation of religious teaching. Correction of popular errors regarding the use of the imagination. Confusion of imagination and thought. Unmodified imaginations the bane of the world. Christian Scientists as would-be Psychologists. Scientific and educated men Evolutionists. The survival of the fittest. The law of evolution one of Natural Selection. The survival of religion one of Artificial Selection. Many undesirable survivals by Artificial Selection. Survival of religions other than the Christian. Exemplification of Artificial Selection in the history of Christianity. Artificial destruction of unbelievers. Error of interpretation of negative position on immortality. The wish the father of the thought. The first law of Nature. The egoistic desire. The physical basis. The passion of criminals. The posi-

The Conversion of Hamilton Wheeler

	Pages
tion of the medical profession. The obvious deduction regardless of aspirations and ambitions. The wisdom of Bacon and Scripture. Hamilton's regimen. Mrs. Wheeler's anxious moments. Dr. Austin's devotion and skill. The newspapers as imparters of forbidden news. The suicide of Edward Stone counterbalanced by a talk. The crisis with the Hunts. Peril of matrimonial expectations. The external evidences of restored health and vigor. The resealing of the engagement.....	262-276

APPENDICES

Appendix A. Evidence regarding relation of age, puberty, and conversion.....	277-278
Appendix B. Kraepelin on delusional ideas of sin.....	278-279
Appendix C. Evidence of material physical basis of the mental function.....	279-280
Appendix D. Disturbances and dissensions among early New England churches caused by Davenport and other violent and unruly itinerant evangelists.....	280-282
Appendix E. Source and sustenance of the Shakers from evangelical church revivals. Attractions for the converted.....	283-285

Introduction

THIS volume is offered as a voluntary contribution to the Mental Hygiene Movement which was begun in 1912, in an "endeavor to reduce the alarming amount of mental impairment in the United States by making public careful statements of the causes of mental diseases, by securing earlier medical treatment, and by preventive social service with individuals threatened with mental breakdown."

In the words of a writer for the movement:

"Mental unsoundness is becoming a serious national handicap and all interested in the welfare of humanity will welcome this opportunity to learn how the mental health of the nation may best be protected."

The chief objects of this commendable movement are:

"To work for the conservation of mental health; to help raise the standard of care for those in danger of developing mental disorder or actually insane; to promote the study of mental disorders in all their forms and relations and to disseminate knowledge concerning their causes, treatment and prevention; to obtain from every source reliable data regarding conditions and methods of dealing with mental disorders; to enlist the aid of the Federal Government so far as may seem desirable; to co-ordinate existing agencies and help organize in each State in the Union an allied, but independent Society for Mental Hygiene, similar to the existing Connecticut Society for Mental Hygiene."

The Conversion of Hamilton Wheeler

The author takes pleasure in adding what, in the published opinion of the Committee on Mental Hygiene of the New York State Charities Aid Society, each person can do in the Mental Hygiene Movement:

1. "Inform yourself thoroughly regarding the causes of mental disease.

2. "Help to make the facts you now possess generally known.

3. "Refrain from those acts and habits which are liable to result in mental disorder.

4. "Speak and think of insanity as a disease not as a crime.

5. "If a relative, friend, or acquaintance seems to be suffering from bad physical or mental habits, take steps to see that he is given the information you possess and receives proper medical care without delay.

6. "Inform yourself of the modern methods of caring for the insane, and lend your voice and influence to all projects which make for better or earlier care of those suffering from mental diseases."

The preparation of such a work as is enclosed between the covers of this book has been attended with many difficulties. The conversational and narrative style of its presentation has been adopted solely as a means to an end, namely of facilitating the presentation of the involved profound problems of biology, physiology, sociology, and religion, in a form easy of comprehension by non-technical readers, and which will

The Conversion of Hamilton Wheeler

perhaps be more realistic, interesting, and attractive than the dry facts would be if presented in a technical scientific treatise.

The clothing with human interest of the facts of the injurious effects upon the converted of evangelistic propaganda, by portraying with some dramatic construction a real life experience, it is hoped may bring their significance and importance home to the reader with a vividness which the didactic works already before the public have apparently failed to do, a conclusion which seems warranted by the fact that evangelists continue their destructive work, ignoring completely the full exposes of their harmful effects which have preceded this one.

Revivalism appears to need an "Uncle Tom's Cabin," as it were, which will so surround the subject with human interest and realism that some degree of compassion may be elicited in behalf of the victims of this nefarious practice. No pretensions are made for this book as a work of fiction.

In view of the difficulties encountered, which have been many, in making of this work a simple presentation of some of the most intricate, complex, and obscured physical processes of psychology and psychiatry, the author craves the patience of the reader, and the limitation of his criticism to the truths set forth and any results that might accrue from a sincere endeavor to elucidate much that heretofore has been relegated to obscurantism and obfuscation by men who

The Conversion of Hamilton Wheeler

have regarded the subject as a kind of "forbidden fruit" and a field "where angels fear to tread."

It is more particularly the recent excesses in this field of the pathology of religion which have led the present author into print, trusting that he may break the ice and be followed by abler pens in this new domain of morbid psychology, which may thus be created as a subject of popular as well as scientific interest.

Perhaps, in the face of efforts at the suppression of public reports of insanity as direct results of revival emotionalism, it will be quite impossible to produce anything like complete statistics, but we have newspaper reports of resulting insanity from Omaha, Neb., Wheeling, Va., Portsmouth, Canton, and Columbus, Ohio, Newcastle and Philadelphia, Pa., and Syracuse, New York. The highest number reported from this list is fourteen distracted from Newcastle, Pennsylvania. At Lima, Ohio, is reported the death from over-excitement, of a Methodist presiding elder on the tabernacle platform, and at McKeesport, Pa., according to report, a former mayor fell dead from the heart failure of over-excitement following his participation in "revival" meetings; Boston and New York are yet to hear from with any completeness.

A noteworthy peculiarity of the reports of these cases is the greater prominence given to the person of the evangelist in the disordered ravings of the insane, than to the thought of God, Christ, or other

The Conversion of Hamilton Wheeler

characters of the Christian theology. A fascination for the personality of the evangelist appears a distinctive and predominant characteristic.

An interesting case reported in the *Syracuse Herald* of January 3, 1916, was that of Edward H. Buchenau, who, following conversion by Mr. Sunday on January 2nd., murdered his mother. He admitted in his confession to the police that he committed the crime in accordance with Mr. Sunday's teachings, with which he became imbued as a frequent attendant and worker. The following quoted from a book of copyrighted sermons is supposed to be the subject of the morbid obsession:

"I sometimes think, almost, that it might be a God-send to many a community if it could be swept by typhoid fever or pneumonia or scarlet fever just after a good revival and before people have a chance to backslide." And again: "It is a good thing that I am not God for fifteen minutes. If I were I would fill your newspapers with obituaries and fill freight cars with the dead."

This insane criminal at Syracuse, according to report, confessed:

"When I went to bed last night I was thinking of mother and wondering if it would not be better for me to kill her.

"After breakfast she stood with her back to me and I thought of the heavy day's work before her and the thought came to me that she would be much happier in heaven.

The Conversion of Hamilton Wheeler

"I suppose I should not have done it, but ever since I hit the trail at the Billy Sunday meetings I have had a different idea of God and life."

The above brief sketch of the more extreme results of revivalism is here presented to show that we have not selected an extreme, but an average case, as the subject of this work.

The very universality and profundity of religion makes it a power in the community. If this power be for evil incalculable harm is done. Government statistics show that nearly forty percent of our total population are enrolled as members of some religious organization, of which perhaps one fourth are active ones. Even admitting that many are children from eight years and upwards, and that many are included in this number who have removed, died, or have drifted away to freethought, or onto the rolls of other churches entailing duplication, the well organized social influence is great, as is also the political.

Experience teaches us that American authorities will not act in defense of their unorganized constituents until the wildest excesses are committed and the greatest irreparable damage is done. We must await the reaction which must come when people attain to a realization of the total injury done in the wholesale manufacture of delinquents, neurotics, and lunatics.

Possibly when the public's attention is directed to the increase in taxes incident to the enormous increase in State institutional insane, which in New York State

The Conversion of Hamilton Wheeler

has already increased twice as fast as the population, they will demand remedial action of the powers that be. It is the same old story—we are a democracy with all officials and legislators subject to public suffrage and fearful of incurring the enmity of any organized body until a body of voters greater than they demand it.

If we are to judge religion by the ultimate results of revivals, we must conclude that it is a disease, and the medical profession must act through health authorities to abolish and eradicate it as a prophylactic measure, as they would eliminate any other parasitic disease or cause of mental alienation.

It is an obvious fact that, whereas the men who conducted the earlier revivals, which were regarded as great awakenings, from a half to two centuries ago, saw their injurious effects and not only discontinued them but wrote books on their grave consequences, cautioning future generations against them; and since, moreover, that many able works on the psychological phenomena of Christianity, the psychology and pathology of religious experience, etc., have been published which go into minute detail of the action, benign and malign, of evangelistic conversion, yet present day evangelists have apparently gone into it with their eyes open, and regardless of anticipated results which they provide emergency hospitals to contend with.

I am indebted to the following authors for valuable data in normal, morbid, and religious psychology:

The Conversion of Hamilton Wheeler

- Henry Maudsley, Pathology of Mind.
Charles Féré, Pathology of the Emotions.
Josiah Moses, Pathological Aspects of Religions.
Josiah Morse, The Psychology and Neurology of Fear.
Angelo Mosso, Fear.
Boris Sidis, The Psychology of Suggestion.
Boris Sidis, Mental Dissociations.
Edward S. Ames, Psychology of Religion.
G. B. Cutten, Psychological Phenomena of Christianity.
William Hirsch, Religion and Civilization, Conclusions of a Psychiatrist.
F. M. Davenport, Primitive Traits in Religious Revivals.
F. M. Davenport, The Religious Revival and the New Evangelism, *The Outlook*, Apr. 8, 1905.
Theodore Schroeder, Religion and Sensualism as Connected by Clergymen. *Amer. Jour. of Religious Psychology and Education*, May 1908.
Theodore Schroeder, Erotogenesis of Religion. *Jour. of Religious Psychology*, Oct. 1912.
Theodore Schroeder, Adolescence and Religion. *Jour. of Religious Psychology*, Apr. 1913.
Theodore Schroeder, Erotogenetic Interpretation of Religion. *Jour. of Religious Psychology*, Jan. 1914.
Josiah Morse, Religion and Immorality. *Amer. Jour. of Religious Psychology and Education*, July 1911.
Edward Carpenter, Connection between Homo-Sexuality and Divination. *Amer. Jour. of Religious Psychology and Education*, July 1911.
Charles W. Super, The Psychology of Christian Hymns. *Am. Jour. of Religious Psychology and Education*, May 1908.
James H. Leuba, Fear, Awe and Sublime in Religion. *Am. Jour. of Religious Psychology and Education*, Mar. 1906.
J. S. VanTesslaar, The Problems and Present Status of Religious Psychology. *Jour. of Religious Psychology*, Nov. 1914. see also
Homer Wakefield, Physiology and Pathology of the Emotions, *Medical Record*, Aug. 22, 1908: The Tissue Density Factor, *New York Medical Journal*, July 27 and Aug. 3, 1912.

In consideration of the fact that it has been the past policy of certain militant clericals to retaliate against speakers and writers who have had the temerity to

The Conversion of Hamilton Wheeler

criticise their ecclesiastical programs, to heap abuse and malignant invective upon them personally, rather than squarely to meet the issues of their statements, the present pen name has been used with a view of directing the criticism to the subject and contents of the work exclusively, and the judgment solely to its intrinsic merit or demerit.

In the preparation and publication of this work, it has been the constant objective and endeavor of the Author and of the Publisher to set forth merely an expose of a malicious institution and a harmful propaganda, which shall be, on our part, entirely devoid of personal malice. The endeavor is to depict causes and effects rather than any defamation of character or personal slander of those engaged in evangelism as a business.

It is hoped that anyone essaying to discuss or defend it will also confine his arguments to the merits or demerits of the theme, to the exclusion of personal attack. If more evidence is demanded to sustain our statements of existing conditions, they will be forthcoming. It is our conscientious ambition to convince those engaged in evangelistic propaganda, as much as general public opinion, of the great wrong which is being done the populace of our country in the name and with the approval of an institution that assumes to stand for moral uplift, and thereby cause them to divert their energies to more useful and healthful endeavor.

THE AUTHOR.

The Conversion of Hamilton Wheeler

Chapter I.

HAMILTON WHEELER had just passed the eighteenth milestone of his life. He was tall, straight, somewhat slender, and those who knew him thought him handsome. This, however, was in part due to a charm of manner and expression that proved seductive to all who came in contact with him. His language was characterized by that clean-cut enunciation which everyone admires, or perhaps it is that they admire those who exhibit it. Hamilton, the only child of a fond mother, had been brought up by her, only as one can be who is the exclusive subject of a life's devotion. Many of his friends who had been witnesses of his mother's absorbing love for him had expressed surprise that he had not been spoiled; yet closer observation explained that. No one with such a mother would be spoiled. Her love was manifested in a different way. It was a compelling rather than a yielding love whose object was not indulged or shielded in any wrong act, and moreover Mrs. Wheeler was always strictly honest with her son, as with everyone with whom she came in contact. Her life was an ever present example to him. She did not hesitate to correct him in manner or speech, and he was in constant training. She was always so kind, polite, sympathetic, and benvolent toward him he would indeed have been an ingrate to have been anything else than what he was. He even unconsciously reflected her superb character.

The Conversion of Hamilton Wheeler

Mr. Wheeler, a well born gentleman, with every promise of a prosperous and happy life, had suddenly died when Hamilton was three years of age. He had already experienced an enviable series of business promotions, accompanied with parallel salary raises, when he was suddenly taken away by pneumonia. After all the adjustments attendant upon the new order of things, Mrs. Wheeler found herself with a modest income, which barely, by frugality and elimination of many pleasures to which she had been accustomed, was made sufficient to meet the exigencies of a respectable living and the bringing up and education of her son.

Ten thousand dollars in life insurance, together with but about fifteen thousand of savings of Mr. Wheeler's curtailed career, had to be conservatively invested in order to combine some degree of safety with the possibilities of income yield. Living in respectable neighborhoods in New York City is not cheap, and some time had to be devoted to the tiresome and tedious ordeal of looking up a new place of residence. A place at once within her financial grasp, in desirable and healthful localities, and convenient to educational institutions, was not easy to find. Many apartments in which one or two rooms contained outside windows, had twice as many that opened onto courts that were as long on distracting noises by day and disturbing ones at night, as they were short of sunlight and fresh air.

After many weary days of tramping about from one offering to another, and viewing place after place

The Conversion of Hamilton Wheeler

which caused her to shudder at the thought that anyone would be expected to tolerate, and notwithstanding the strenuous efforts of janitors, caretakers, and realty agents to induce her to rent quarters that she did not want, she finally located and secured a delightful little six room apartment on Harlem Heights, near to Columbia University. Here she found an environment that, for charm of natural topography, scenery, architectural beauty, and intellectual atmosphere, is probably unsurpassed in the United States.

This glorious residential section of New York, rising high above the tidal waters of the Hudson, capped as it is by the largest University in the world, bounded on the East by the beautiful Morningside Park, with its walled bluffs, from which one can overlook the housetops of Harlem, and on the West by the fashionable Riverside Drive Park, the picturesque Hudson river and the rugged Palisades beyond, has an irresistible appeal for the poetical and romantic side of one's nature.

Hamilton Wheeler was reared in this fairyland section of the great American Metropolis. Daily, when the weather permitted, from his earliest memory, his mother took him by the hand and led him to the Drives or Parks, where he would find agreeable playmates among the children of the neighborhood who reveled in their childish sports, while their mothers, governesses, or nurses in the settees, found congenial company among the many frequenters of these pleasant Drives and Parks.

The Conversion of Hamilton Wheeler

Prior to Mr. Wheeler's death, his wealthy employer, Mr. Hunt, who was very fond of him, was accustomed to urging the Wheelers to the most cordial and intimate relations with his family. Invitations to dinners at their town house, to theatre parties, after theatre dinners at the leading hotels and restaurants were frequent, and during the summer when the Hunts were at their country place on Long Island, Mrs. Wheeler with Hamilton spent several weeks at a time, while Mr. Wheeler would go out to spend his Sundays with Mr. Hunt.

During these halcyon days Hamilton and little Eleanor Hunt, who was but six months his junior, became childish lovers, and much was said, at first in jest and later with seriousness, that when they grew up a permanent alliance between the Hunt and Wheeler families would be consummated by the marriage of these children. Later Mr. Hunt frequently spoke of how Hamilton was to be trained by his parents so that one day, as the husband of Eleanor, his only child, he would succeed himself as the owner of his great business and estate. After Mr. Wheeler's death, Mr. Hunt assured Mrs. Wheeler that it would make no difference with Hamilton's career, and as soon as he graduated from College he should at once have a responsible position.

Mr. Wheeler's death made no difference in the social relations between the Hunt and Wheeler families at any time. The greatest pleasures Mrs. Wheeler and

The Conversion of Hamilton Wheeler

Hamilton enjoyed during the period of their modest living and deprivation from many things to which they had been accustomed during Mr. Wheeler's lifetime, came from the Hunts; and Hamilton and Eleanor grew closer together as they approached manhood and womanhood and the happy day when they would unite for life. Hardly a week passed that the Hunts did not telephone up some invitation or proposal of something to brighten the life of the Wheelers.

Hamilton also had another great expectation. Mrs. Wheeler's uncle, Dr. Austin, had in contemplation no other heir of his life's competence than his niece, Mrs. Wheeler, and some day it also would be Hamilton's. Dr. Austin was as interested in Hamilton as he could possibly have been in an own son. He was as anxious for him to have every mental and moral training and education that any young man could have, and he watched closely his general mental and physical development with the most affectionate interest. After Mr. Wheeler's death, Dr. Austin's interest became more than ever a fatherly one.

One day, Hamilton, having passed his sixth year, all was excitement and exalted anticipation, as the day of school opening had arrived, and he was entered in the primary department. The nearby Horace Mann School was chosen where it was intended that he should continue until he had graduated from its High School, when he would enter Columbia or Harvard. A few weeks later Hamilton's turn had come and the hour

The Conversion of Hamilton Wheeler

was set for his physical examination. There was, however, no cause for anxiety. His measurements were above the average for a boy of his age, and his lung and heart test found nothing wanting.

Nine years slipped away like a dream, and the end of the Spring Semester found Hamilton at fifteen with his examinations passed successfully and looking forward to entering the second year of High School the following Autumn. This brought a crisis in the affairs of Hamilton and his mother, for the school authorities had now arranged a separation of the boys and girls, and a new school building for the boys had been erected near Van Cortlandt Park. Here Hamilton was destined to go to complete his preparatory course, and in order to live convenient to the school, Mrs. Wheeler removed to a newly built and building section, locating in a desirable modern apartment which had just been completed, near to the new school.

The usual incidents of removal in New York were experienced. Thefts, damage to furniture, and overcharging by the van men were encountered, followed by the stress of replacement, repairs, and getting settled in the new habitation. After it was all over, however, and a respite of a breathing spell was offered, the new locality was found a most pleasant one, and advantageous in many ways.

Not the least of these was the proximity to and accessibility of the great playground of the city, where ice skating in winter and all outdoor sports in summer

The Conversion of Hamilton Wheeler

attract the young people from all parts of the city, and athletic contestants and prodigious audiences assemble for great tournaments. Here Hamilton Wheeler found everything to his liking. He was fond of all athletic sports, and was a favorite among the boys of his class when selections were being made of teams to contest in behalf of his class for the honors of victory.

Over two years having swiftly fled, we find Hamilton engrossed in his Senior year, working hard in preparation, not only for his approaching examinations for graduation, but also for his entrance to college. The continuous stress of his labors, involving home work late into the night, had so consumed his time that he was compelled to abandon much of his outdoor sports, and his life became more and more a sedentary one. The effects of overwork were manifest.

Mrs. Wheeler had noticed these indications, and they were to her a source of anxiety. Hamilton became restless and occasionally somewhat irritable. The radiant complexion and bright eyes of former years had given place to pallor and ocular dullness, occasionally dark lines under his eyes. His alert and solicitous mother was truly in a quandary. She realized that her boy was overdoing, and jeopardizing not only his immediate capacity and achievement, but possibly his whole life, while on the other hand, should he relax his efforts he might fail in his examinations, and thus defer a year the completion of his education, which she felt she could hardly afford.

The Conversion of Hamilton Wheeler

The cost of living had increased by leaps and bounds since the onset of the European war, and her slender income had barely sufficed for life's necessities when living cost was normal. Moreover, as Hamilton advanced in his studies, the tuition fee increased correspondingly, whereas the saving in rent in removing farther uptown failed to compensate for it.

Mrs. Wheeler knew that if Hamilton entered College the following Autumn she could make ends meet, owing to the fact that College tuitions are always lower than those of preparatory schools. However, her solicitude for her son's health caused her to plead with him to slacken his pace and take hours of respite in rest and recreation; anything to relax the stress of his monotonous application, and give him diversion and change of scene. But to give up when the goal was in sight was against Hamilton's grain, and he silently vowed to fight to the very end.

The Conversion of Hamilton Wheeler

Chapter II.

ONE Friday night, after an especially hard week's work, and one which had exhibited its dire effects on Hamilton in many ways, one of his school boy friends, Burton Rogers, telephoned him that a group of boys were going to hear the much talked-of Evangelist, who was then in town, and asked if he would join them. Hamilton's first impulse was to decline and explain that he had an immense amount of homework to do before Monday, but Mrs. Wheeler, placing her hand upon his shoulder, urged him to accept, and that to go would do him good. He acceded, and went with his friends.

The Wheelers had always been Episcopalians, and, like all Episcopalians, their worship had ever been ritualistic and perfunctory. The formalistic services were regularly attended and enjoyed. Hamilton had been brought up to believe the contents of the Bible as the infallible and sacred word of God, as delivered to man through a series of revelations by inspiration.

Hamilton had never experienced such an emotion as the Evangelical churches regard as that of conversion, or the imbibing of the Holy Spirit. His religion was that serene abiding faith in the systemic religion which is prescribed as necessary to salvation. This he gave a sort of sanction or passive adherence, and he participated in the church ritual in the perfunctory and oblivious manner of the average churchman, who thus

The Conversion of Hamilton Wheeler

complies with church ordinance and has no illusions regarding emotional religion or of materially sensing God, Christ, or the Holy Ghost.

On the occasion of this his first witness of a revival, Hamilton was primarily amused at the fantastic acrobatic feats of the Evangelist. Later he was impressed by the thunderous expounding of selected passages of Holy Writ, in which he had always been taught to believe implicitly. Can it be, he thought, that this good book does so clearly enunciate demands of people for their salvation, such as this Evangelist expounds? Can it be that he had never been born again and of the Spirit, now pronounced to be so necessary for salvation? Then he thought it must not be taken too seriously. Surely his good mother, and all the good people he knew in his church, must know what they are about, and that they are safe in the church and creed of their choice. Thus musing to himself, his thoughts returned to the ludicrous side of it.

The antics of the Evangelist were so widely contrasting with the dignified and ceremonious deportment of the Rectors of his church he could hardly imagine the two to be of the same profession and religion. The alternate savage attacks upon persons and institutions, on religions and works of which the Evangelist did not approve, the vile and abusive language that reached his ears shocked every sense of refinement and culture that had characterized his training and the atmosphere of his life. Surely this man cannot be inspired of God or be a vicar of Christ!

The Conversion of Hamilton Wheeler

On that memorable Friday night, Hamilton was agitated and convulsed with pent up emotion, brought on by the service, which caused him to feel like giving it vent in jumping, shouting, or some other violent outburst. The peculiar emotional sway of the revival songs was productive in Hamilton of a high degree of impetus and momentum in the form of an active motor expression. The abrupt substitution for it was made by a succeeding passive immobile state, when seated, combined with the intense mental excitement, which was produced by the emotion agitating evangelism that developed. He was conscious of a change on his own part from a *positive* motor activity to an immobility which was *negative* to the positive agitation of the Evangelist, and that he was rocked, as it were, from one extreme to the other as he alternately rose to join in the singing and sat down to subordinate himself to the agitating tactics of the Evangelist.

At the end of the evening he experienced a sense of being highly wrought, and in a state of tension. He felt worked up—warmed up emotionally—as of one who had passed through an experience that developed a passion to some impulsive, even a rash act, he knew not what, whatever presented itself. If it had been temptation, the forward impulse would have by far overwhelmed his weak resistance. He could understand how men under the stimulus—the impetus—of alcohol have unwittingly yielded to temptation, or pushed headlong into one or more of the pitfalls which

The Conversion of Hamilton Wheeler

beset mankind. He felt the sense of motor tension, of vague goading, impelling to that aggressiveness which leads to overt and unseemly acts. It was analogous with the Sunday School teachings of his youth, wherein is represented a demoniacal tempter and inciter to wrong-doing in a life contest with angels for the mastery of the volition, but at a time when the angels must have been off duty.

As the great congregation surged through the exits of the Tabernacle, following its dismissal, elbowing, crowding, and pushing, Hamilton was surprised at the tumultuousness, the turbulence, and boisterousness of the departing throng which completely separated him and two of the boys from the rest of his friends. It was apparently giving vent to a suppressed emotion which had been accumulating for a couple of hours under high pressure.

Among the throng leading to the transportation lines were many groups of young fellows and others of young girls. They did not appear sobered or austere as one might expect, as affected by the lambasting, browbeating, and exhorting to which they had been subjected. To the contrary, they appeared less than ordinarily reserved and restrained. Many were exuberant, giddy, even hilarious and indecorous. Both sexes were so prepared, so emotionally ripe, that repeated instances of "catching on" were noted without the usual formalities. While Hamilton's attention was engrossed in observations of coquetry going on about

The Conversion of Hamilton Wheeler

him, he had not noticed that his two young men companions had begun a violent flirtation with three girls standing on the corner opposite them. At first Hamilton was in a degree shocked. He had given so little attention to it that he was generally all but oblivious of what was clandestinely going on about him.

"Come on boys," he said, "unless we hustle home we will be lost in the jam."

"Look across there and tell me if you are in a hurry to get home," was the answer.

"They are pretty 'good lookers,'" remarked Hamilton, as he gazed at the girls admiringly.

Apparently both the girls and the boys were green at making unconventional acquaintanceships, but there appeared to be a mutual desire to overcome all embarrassments and exchange pleasantries.

After a few bantering exchanges, the boys crossed to the other side of the street, and boldly approaching the girls, doffed their hats, and offering their arms, volunteered to escort them home. Having once broken the ice, it was not long before the newness of their acquaintances was entirely lost sight of, and unrestrained familiarity prevailed.

After proceeding a considerable distance together, the couples separated as the localities of the homes of the girls were approached. Finally, Hamilton found himself separated from all but the girl of his evening's choice. In fact both of them were oblivious of every-

The Conversion of Hamilton Wheeler

thing but each other. Finally when her home was reached, both were sorry it was not farther away. She had a key to the outer door, so it was not necessary to ring. They entered the vestibule in the dim reflected light from the street. Taking her hand in his, Hamilton told her how pleasant an evening he had enjoyed, thanks to meeting her, however unconventionally. As he relaxed his warm grip of her hand, he noted that she did not relax her's. He looked at her and observed her eyes riveted to his with a warm passion, of which there could be no question. He hesitated but a moment, then throwing both arms around her he passionately kissed her over and over. She responded as warmly in both embraces and kisses.

For the first time since he left the Tabernacle, Hamilton felt he was giving vent to emotions that had been called into being by the series of agitations to which he had been subject. He thought how divine is love! Religion kindles what love fulfills, and only love can fulfill. Suddenly, while still clasping the object of his first passion in his arms, it began to dawn on him—the compromising situation that had so suddenly developed. Who is she? He did not even know her name, her life, or her people. He had not even had a good look at her, other than by street lights. He removed his arms from her, took her by both hands, said good night, kissed her once more, and hurried away.

After Hamilton's return from the revival meeting,

The Conversion of Hamilton Wheeler

he was mentally disconcerted, nonplussed, and bewildered. All his ideas of religion and its mission were confused. Prior to this, his concept had been that it is an institution of culture, of refinement, and sublimity. His mental picture of a clergyman as a man of stateliness, dignity, gentility, and lofty nobility, had been rudely shaken by one who was in turn a clown, an acrobat, a mountebank, a vulgar ruffian and a savage barbarian. Could it be that a combination of the city churches had with full knowledge of their act, engaged such a man as this to lead the populace to the Lord?

All during the following week, Hamilton made strenuous efforts to return to his studious habits. It appeared that he redoubled his efforts in vain. His application seemed to be a thing of the past. There was a vague sense of excited imagery dominating his mental horizon. The vast crowd of the tabernacle audience and the wild ejaculations of the Evangelist on the platform kept appearing and reappearing in a series of day dreams which arrested his attention and monopolized his thoughts. Observing this, as he could not help doing, he added anxiety and worry over his delinquency to his other troubles.

He regretted having broken into his school work to attend the revival, and resolved by all that was good and holy he would never go again. It is true he had not anticipated that he would see or hear anything of a disquieting nature when he yielded to his mother's entreaties on the eventful Friday night, or nothing

The Conversion of Hamilton Wheeler

would have induced him to go. Mrs. Wheeler also had noticed that Hamilton was not the same as he had been, for some days, but she had not mentioned it to her son or even connected it in any way with the attendance upon the revival. It was not to be expected that a layman should think of any modern religious service as a cause of either physical or mental disorder or derangement.

The morning after the revival he experienced a vague sense of restlessness, of diffuse excitement. The animation, the buoyancy, and the exaltation of the great stimulus of the night before had passed off, leaving a state of irritable weakness. What part of it was due to the reaction to the overwrought emotional state, and what part to the lark that was its immediate sequence, it is difficult to judge. However, the end result was most discomfiting and the physical condition was now as exhausted and depressed as it had been roused, inflamed, and excited. All ambition to work was gone, and a feeling of lassitude and incapacity overwhelmed him. Hamilton's entire temperament and character had changed. He was morose and sullen even in the presence of his mother. He was resentful and spiteful without provocation. He wanted to be left alone to indulge a wandering imagination, and in day-dreams, which carried him into the vagaries of religious revery and fantasy. Were he at this time to be guided to religious obsession, asceticism would be facilitated by his present condition. The most morbid and sordid thoughts would be developed.

The Conversion of Hamilton Wheeler

Hamilton wondered what possessed him to yield to a temptation that had never before possessed him. To be sure he had not gone to the extreme of illicit love, but he had been carried off his feet by impulses he had never before experienced, and the whole of the escapade of the evening before opened to his view a side of social life that might otherwise have remained unknown to him for some time to come. It was probably better that the depressing consequences were as they were, otherwise they might have led to worse results in a natural progression of events. As it was, as soon as the depression and irritable weakness were recovered from, the resumption of his school work and an environment, clean, pure, and free from all corrupting and contaminating influences, Hamilton soon forgot the erotic impulses and his folly as he again buried himself in his work. If now he but lives up to his resolution to keep away from revivals in the future, no further anxiety need be felt for the outcome from this, his first indiscretion.

The Conversion of Hamilton Wheeler

Chapter III.

ON A bright sunny afternoon Mrs. Wheeler was at home alone reading. Suddenly the door-bell rang, and when she opened the door her cousin Martha Wheatcroft, stood before her in a state of most evident excitement. Mrs. Wheeler at once read in her face and restless bearing that something serious had happened. "What is the matter now?" she inquired, solicitously, as they passed down the narrow apartment hallway.

"I have left John," her cousin answered.

"For what?" inquired Mrs. Wheeler.

"Oh," said she, "I have not been satisfied with the way he has been supporting me for some time."

"But what are you going to do now?" questioned Mrs. Wheeler.

"I don't know, and I don't care," was the retort. "I could not do worse than to live with a man who fails to support his wife in a manner such as any woman has a right to expect."

"Well, sit down and tell me all about it," returned Mrs. Wheeler, as she turned a chair about for her cousin, and sat down in another facing her.

Mrs. Wheatcroft seated herself deliberately, took several sighing breaths, and began: "I have been trying for some time to get John to strike the house for a raise in salary, but he refused because he said he knew their business was seriously affected by the war

The Conversion of Hamilton Wheeler

and they could not afford to pay an increase. I insisted that the increased cost of living made it necessary for us to have more, and other firms were raising their payroll to meet it. Still he remained obdurate, and said if he insisted they might let him go entirely. He said if they raised his salary, they would have to make it general, which would make it necessary to close up entirely. How silly!"

"But," remarked Mrs. Wheeler, "you have three houses in your town, rented, which must help you out quite a little."

"No," answered Mrs. Wheatcroft, "that is one of our troubles. Only one of them is rented, and the increased taxes and all expenses make the three houses cost us considerably more than we receive for the one, so this ownership at this time of general retrenchment, is a source of loss rather than income, and we get nothing on our investment. We never do at such times.

"I told John if he was a mechanic of some kind, or a railroad trainman, he and the other employees would go on a strike and force the wage increase they wanted, but here he is a high-class and almost indispensable man, and he can't get enough for a decent living."

"But," rejoined Mrs. Wheeler, "do you think you can better your condition by leaving John? You have always said he was such a good man, so kind, and so thoughtful for you. I can hardly believe you are leaving him for such a cause."

The Conversion of Hamilton Wheeler

"You don't understand," remonstrated Mrs. Wheatcroft. "I would not live with any man who did not support me. I have had to take from my own money to clothe myself and the children. I told John I could have no respect for a man who did not support his wife and family. I have stood it as long as I am going to and I am through."

"But my dear child," retorted Mrs. Wheeler, "you have recently given what to me appear to be good reasons why John has not been able to do more for you. If he has given his all he has done all you can expect. I have always liked John, and I think any woman should be glad to have such a husband as he."

"You do!" responded Mrs. Wheatcroft. "Perhaps you would like him yourself. Well, you may have him. I don't want him. I have had no respect for him for a long time, and I have told him so, and why. The children know it, too. They understand it perfectly, and they can have no more respect for him than I have. I shall just let him go his way, and I shall go mine."

"What are you going to do now for someone to look after your property? Just think, you could not get anyone to do all John does, even for his board, if you were paying it for him, and yet John does it for nothing. Besides that he gives all he can toward a complete living, and yet you want to get rid of him."

"Oh, Helen," ejaculated Mrs. Wheatcroft, "you cannot put yourself in my place. If you could, you would not talk as you do. You know John is ten years older

The Conversion of Hamilton Wheeler

than I. When we were both young I did not notice it, but now he has lost his hair, and is otherwise showing his age. He is now past middle age, and I am in my prime. I am admired by other and younger men. I can't waste my life living with an old man. I have told him so. It is awful. Just think of a woman like me tied to a man like that.

"I like ever so many things that he does not care for, and I long for a man of my own age. I know there are plenty of them I could get, and who would be glad to have me if I were only free. When I see other women of my own age going out evenings with escorts, having a good time, I fairly hate John to think that I must call such as he my husband, instead of one like some of the other men I continually meet and admire. Other men are better earners than John, too."

Mrs. Wheeler's eyes moistened as she heard the excited and emphatic expressions of her cousin. What a fool, she thought to herself. But perhaps she could not help it, poor soul. Martha Wheatcroft had always been one of those tense individuals such as are not infrequently found in both sexes, who are full of thought of self, suffering from hyperesthesia of sense of self or ego.

Mrs. Wheeler endeavored in every way possible to allay the excitement and quiet her cousin, but to no avail. All she received for her pains was an accusation that she herself must be fond of John Wheatcroft. "You may have him if you want him," Martha repeat-

The Conversion of Hamilton Wheeler

ed with considerable show of feeling, "I am through with him, and with you, if you have no more cousinly feeling for me than that."

When Mrs. Wheatcroft had delivered herself of these hasty remarks, she looked almost furiously at Mrs. Wheeler, but instead of anger and resentfulness she observed an expression of pain or grief. She hesitated a few moments, stared into space thoughtfully, then said: "Pardon me, Helen, you know I am quick. I did not mean it. I was in a terrible state of excitement when I came in. You know I really am a good religious woman and expect to go to Heaven when I die. I am not as bad as I seem."

Mrs. Wheeler arose, and approaching Mrs. Wheatcroft, placed her hand on her shoulder tenderly, and soothingly said: "My dear, I am glad to know you did not mean such a thing, but you must not so far forget yourself as to say such things that you do not mean. You know how very sensitive your own feelings are, so sensitive in fact that you are constantly imagining slights and offenses from others, when such a thing is not thought of by any but you. One would think that when you are yourself so sensitive you would be most solicitous and considerate of the feelings of others, yet you appear absolutely oblivious of them; you often cut your best friends deeply without apparent realization of what you are doing.

"I fear your own disposition is at the bottom of your troubles with John. I have heard you nag, criti-

The Conversion of Hamilton Wheeler

cize, reprimand, depreciate, and ridicule him, time and again, and marveled at his tolerance of it. Few men would have stood it as John has. I would have thought him a sincere devotee to the injunction of Jesus to turn the other cheek, did I not know him to be an unbeliever in Christianity. I am ashamed that you—my cousin—a devoted Christian and religious woman, are the source of the trouble, while John, the unbeliever, is the real angel.”

Mrs. Wheatcroft looked daggers at her cousin. She well knew that all Mrs. Wheeler said was only too true, but she would not admit it, now any more than in the past. After a few moments' meditation, she looked up into the grave and pathetic countenance of her cousin, and complained: “Helen, the trouble with you is, you don't understand me. John does not understand me. Both of you hold me too seriously to account for things I say but really don't mean, and for what I do without evil motive. I must have a little latitude. Women are altogether too closely limited in their rights by the selfish men.

“You never have identified yourself with the suffrage movement. If you were a true woman and loyal to your sister woman you would. I must bring you some literature pointing out the many ways that woman is deprived of her rights.”

“You need not,” retorted Mrs. Wheeler. “I don't care to read such matter. I know the situation as well as you do. I would like to see my sex have all

The Conversion of Hamilton Wheeler

true rights, but if I thought some of the fickle and whimsical women I know were to have any hand in legislation, I would feel less secure than I do today. What I mistrust is the restless aggressive natures of many such who are the loudest exponents of woman's suffrage."

Mrs. Wheatcroft had long identified herself with the suffragist movement, which her husband never resented. He was one of those men who are ever alert to show every possible courtesy to the fair sex. He had patiently submitted to all manner of insult and affront from her because she was a woman and his wife. He never antagonized the movement, although he saw in it an outward collective expression of an attitude toward men which his wife emphasized so strongly. That same observation was what biased Mrs. Wheeler against it, and Mrs. Wheatcroft read her cousin's expression more as a resentment of her own attitude than of the movement otherwise.

"I suppose," observed Mrs. Wheatcroft, "that you even question my religious loyalty, just as you appear to construe my political affiliations as so expressive of my personal proclivities."

"I don't question your loyalty to your idea of religion, I don't regard you as a hypocrite," retorted Mrs. Wheeler, "but like your political policy, I regard your religious life as an expression of your inmost feelings, and I regret to say I find them very selfish. Although I grant your sincerity, your only concern

The Conversion of Hamilton Wheeler

is to save your soul, rather than to find in your religion a field to do good in the world."

Mrs. Wheatcroft showed plainly in her alternate pallor and flushes of the face, as Mrs. Wheeler spoke, that she was alternately impressed and angered at the plain language she had heard. The complete absence of all bitterness and feeling, and the corresponding quiet poise and calm but firm demeanor of Mrs. Wheeler, had quite unnerved her emotional and unstable cousin who had sat transfixed during this declaration.

"I understand you," finally almost shouted Mrs. Wheatcroft in an outburst of emotion. "*You* content yourself with ritualistic performances. *You* go to church to see ceremonies performed, and think you are worshiping the Lord. In *my* church we *experience* religion. We actually *know* and *feel* the Lord. You don't know what true religion is. We do. We experience the actual feeling of the Holy Spirit; and yet you have the face to question my religious status."

Mrs. Wheeler sat thoughtfully a moment. She recalled her cousin's vivid imagination, her emotional instability, her habit of jumping to rash conclusions, her sentimental references to her wonderful intuition, so superior to her husband's plodding deliberations, which she had ever held in righteous contempt, though they had always been her balance wheel.

Mrs. Wheeler thought: "Can this be another of her delusions or hallucinations?" She concluded to satis-

The Conversion of Hamilton Wheeler

fy herself if possible. "Martha," she observed, "I confess I have never sensed the feeling of the near presence of the Holy Spirit. The God of my religion has always seemed far away to me, although I have always had a vague idea He is everywhere, that He is an infinite Spirit—omnipresent and omnipotent. If you would but describe your feeling of immediate presence, it might help me to such a feeling. Certainly you can give me some clue."

Mrs. Wheatcroft appeared bewildered. She started to speak, then hesitated. Finally she stammered: "Well, you see one does not feel it all the time. One feels it under certain circumstances. I feel it under the inspiration of a good sermon, or after singing hymns. You see one has to be worked up to it, to be led into the Lord's presence, as it were. The other evening I attended the revival, and the latter part of the service I felt it the most strongly of my life. It was grand. I felt so exalted and happy, it was like heaven."

"That is very interesting," continued Mrs. Wheeler. "but next I want to ask you if you ever notice similar feelings during joyful emotions other than of a religious nature? For example, when they are accompanied with considerable enthusiasm?"

Mrs. Wheatcroft paused thoughtfully a few anxious moments, and then confessed: "Well, in one sense I do, but of course they are not associated with the idea of the divine presence."

The Conversion of Hamilton Wheeler

At first Mrs. Wheeler thought maybe her own religion was deficient and inferior to her cousin's, but now she began to realize that the underlying basis of her cousin's vivid sense of the divine presence was her emotional status and uncontrolled imagination. In that event, she wanted none of it. She had often heard her father comment on emotional religion to be shunned, and his surviving brother, Dr. Austin, had many times supplemented it. Moreover, Dr. Austin had often referred to his other niece, Mrs. Wheatcroft, as an example of the hyperesthetic and hysterical type of woman, which he had also warned Hamilton to avoid in the matrimonial market.

Of the three Austin brothers, but one, the father of Mrs. Wheatcroft, was addicted to liquor. He died in early life, not soon enough to entirely avoid parenthood, but fortunately leaving but the one child. It was not realized that this child had inherited any disabilities until after her marriage, when one after another of the typical hyperesthetic and hysterical features developed. Dr. Austin expressed sorrow for her, but almost involuntarily he avoided her, and he, like the rest of the family circle, was in constant dread for fear she would commit some deed which would bring disgrace on the good name of the family.

She had early exhibited marked religious fervor and identified herself with the Methodists. It was the church neither of her husband's nor her own family, but it especially appealed to her nature. She was

The Conversion of Hamilton Wheeler

now carried off her feet by the present great revival. She enjoyed the emotional sprees it afforded her. That seemed harmless enough, but unfortunately she carried away with her an excited and restless spirit which was finding expression in political, social, and family discontent. She was rapidly drifting toward a divorce from a good and indulgent husband who had already tolerated and forgiven what few men would.

Mrs. Wheatcroft's ever besetting sin was her self-love and self-pity. Whenever she was exhibiting her impatience, unendurance, and intolerance of others, she was exuberant with the vice of self-exaltation and self-love. Alternating with this she was depressed and overcome with self-pity. No one was ever so persecuted as she. She had now changed from the imperious and defiant attitude she had exhibited when she came in, to one of self-pity. She wished she was dead since no one cared for her, not even her nearest of kin.

Mrs. Wheeler had at first opposed all Mrs. Wheatcroft's excesses of expression, fearing lest her intemperance of behavior would find issue in some rash act. She had, however, no more than accomplished that than she had the opposite emotion to contend with. She recalled on previous occasions how Mrs. Wheatcroft had abruptly gone from emotional laughter to sobs and tears. She had long ago learned that argument and reason were of little avail. She had these two alternatives, either to get her out for a change of scene or

The Conversion of Hamilton Wheeler

to something which would exalt her emotionally. She chose the former, and they went out for a walk on the river Drive. After a walk of some distance they parted, each of the cousins returning to her respective home.

The Conversion of Hamilton Wheeler

Chapter IV.

HAVING finished dinner, Hamilton arose from the table, paced the floor, and in general demeanor exhibited a state of unrest and fidgetiness. Mrs. Wheeler was not slow in noticing this, but seeking to restrain her anxiety, calmly suggested that he had better go out into the air. Hamilton had thought of putting in another evening in study, but feeling restless and recalling that it was Friday, with no more recitations till Monday, he resolved to shelve his books and papers for the present and go out for a good walk.

Fate, however, intervened, for before Hamilton had passed many blocks he met an old acquaintance, Tom Young by name, whom he had not seen in many years. Tom saluted cordially; Hamilton responded with equal cordiality, and passed by. Tom turning about after he had passed, called back to Hamilton: "Where are you going, old man?"

"Just out for a walk," responded Hamilton.

"Have you been to the revival yet?" queried Tom.

"I have been once," replied Hamilton.

"What do you say to going over? It is the biggest free show around here," said Tom.

"I don't care for it," commented Hamilton. "It unstrings me, and that jumping-jack of a revivalist gets on my nerves."

Tom had now turned back to Hamilton's side, and

The Conversion of Hamilton Wheeler

in an impatient voice observed: "Don't be a chump. Come on, they have got the excitement up now and it is a perfect picnic to see them all worked up."

Hamilton did not reply, but yielded to Tom's gentle sway of his shoulder in the direction of the Tabernacle. They were early, and they had a good choice of seats. Tom was for a front seat, and they got what he wanted. A wait of over an hour was largely consumed in observing the incoming crowds. Tom was loquacious and vivacious, and had something to say for every passing minute.

Two seats, one on each side of the boys, had been left unoccupied by the serious folk, who soon hemmed them in until time for the service to begin. The more austere were evidently opposed to sitting by the side of two such animated boys. Finally an usher spied them, and in a few moments he returned with two girls about seventeen years old. They desired to sit together, and upon a request to that effect by the usher, the boys quickly moved along. The two girls then passed in and occupied the two seats beside them.

For a while there was little recognition between them, but before long, whenever anything was said that was intended as wit or humor, there appeared a disposition on the part of both the girls and the boys to look to the others for smiles of approval. Later, comment entailed comment until an acquaintance had sprung up between them, and finally they became like old intimates.

The Conversion of Hamilton Wheeler

At last the Choir Master appeared on the platform, the strains of the music filled the building, and at the sign of the leader the great choir began the first hymn. As soon as it was finished another was announced and sung. A scripture text was read, prayer was offered, and other songs by the choir followed. Attention was now fixed on the platform occupants, and all mental diversion of the auditors was swept away. The expectant attention of the great audience reigned supreme.

The Evangelist, answering the signal of the Choir Master and mounting the platform, began at once emphatically, positively, and strenuously, to utter the dogmatic affirmations of what he represented to be the word of God. On and on he proceeded, emphasizing his strictures with all manner of feats of agility and violent gesticulation. It was enough to make one dizzy to follow him in word and act. A sense of fatigue of the eye, the ear, and of the attention must have overwhelmed his auditors as they sat with a glare of brilliant electric lights shining in their eyes, and in cramped and immobile postures. The quartette also sat fascinated, with eyes riveted on the speaker and actor. They seemed in a trance, in ecstatic rigidity.

Then came the invitation to come forward, but still they sat spellbound, horror stricken at vivid pictures of terrible consequences to those who should hesitate to take advantage of an offer of salvation, which the Evangelist opened to them. A struggle seemed to

The Conversion of Hamilton Wheeler

possess them. Antagonistic impulses impelled them, one to give vent to a pent up accumulation of energy which seemed bursting to freedom, on the one hand, and a vice-like inhibition on the other. If they moved at all, running would better vent their feelings than walking, but they sat transfixed. The longer they sat the greater the tension became, until it reached a painful state of stress. A sense of oppression in the chest became progressively more distressing until the breathlessness became a serious feature.

Finally their attention was directed to a movement all about them, persons passing down the aisles to the front. The sense of stress impelling to movement now began to crystalize itself in a disposition to join in the same movement, and at last a suggestion to them by a worker started one of the girls nearest the aisle. She was followed by the other girl and the two boys. They followed the throng, but half conscious, like drunken persons, with small recognition of their surroundings or of the distance covered. It was like a dream or somnambulism.

Finally landed into a front row of seats, they were aroused from their reveries and sobered up, as it were, by workers who passed among them questioning them regarding their desires, card registering, etc. The service was now nearly over. They could return to their seats only with difficulty, owing to the many who were going forward like a contagion or epidemic, so they determined to start home ahead of the crowd.

The Conversion of Hamilton Wheeler

Instinctively, without premeditation or prearrangement of any kind, the four passed out together. When they had reached the street, Tom, who was always the more aggressive, asked the girls where they lived. "Near Atlantic Avenue, Brooklyn," at first staggered them somewhat, but without betraying it they proceeded together to the subway station, got on an express, and were soon rapidly on the way to their destination.

On arriving at the Atlantic Avenue station, a few blocks walk took them to a door which was indicated as the home of one of the girls, and where they both were to spend the night. One of the girls asked the time, and as it appeared it was but eleven o'clock, both girls insisted that the boys must come in for a little while.

From the time of leaving the tabernacle all four of the young people exhibited unusual excitement which was manifested in animation, vivacity, loquacity, and general heartiness. There was also an unconscious mutual show of affection of more than ordinary ardor. It appeared that the emotionalism, with which they were so recently convulsed, still lingered in the absence of the theological associations of but an hour ago, which had dominated their attentions and thrilled them through and through. It lingered in the form of love—of passion.

In the living room with a lone dim light, the two couples sat chatting in suppressed voices, in whispers

The Conversion of Hamilton Wheeler

and undertones. Time flitted away with no signs of parting. First came embraces, then passionate kisses. Time added to the fuel, the spark broke into a flame. It proved to be the old, old story of not wisely, but too well. Then came an awful consciousness that something dreadful had happened. The boys felt pressed to hurry home to escape the consequences of imprudent acts. They hurried back to Manhattan; Tom got off downtown, and Hamilton continued on to his uptown home, worried, anxious, sick at heart, and frightened at his own indiscretion.

Arriving home, Hamilton slipped quietly into his room and retired without arousing his mother. Everything was favorable for a good night's rest, but for his mental restlessness. That prevented him from sleeping. As he lay agitated and worried, all the events of the evening passed through his mind. He thought, how could he have so far forgotten himself as to be guilty. What a remarkable situation. All so passionate and so weak-willed as to so easily submit to it. It was his first experience, though evidently not Tom's. Tom led the way, but the rest followed like sheep. The girls, apparently of good family, with considerable degree of refinement and culture, had probably, like Hamilton, never forgotten themselves before. The outcome, no one could tell.

Should he shoulder the possible responsibility like a man, or cowardly escape it if he could? The girls did not know him, and might be inclined to suppress their

The Conversion of Hamilton Wheeler

own ignominy. What if it would lead to suicide or complete moral degradation? He shuddered as numerous possibilities flashed through his head. Neither his mother nor he could support a wife, and such disgrace would probably kill her and create such disgust in his uncle Austin that he would cut him off henceforward, and his educational prospects and entire future would be ruined.

While he thus lay musing on all manner of ugly possibilities, his mother came into his room to call him to get up for breakfast. He was startled at her intrusion on his thoughts, and while the five hours spent in bed seemed like twenty, he had not slept, and he arose exhausted and worn. When he appeared at breakfast, his mother gasped as she gazed at his heavy eyes and sodden, morose features. She questioned him closely where he had been the night before. She anxiously interrogated him what bad company he had fallen in with, had he been drinking, and everything else she could think of.

At first, fearful of being found out, Hamilton evaded, dodged, and endeavored to side-track his mother, but she became suspicious and pressed yet more persistently for a straightforward answer, which she knew would be reliable whenever she could extract it. Her persistence, however, only irritated him. He became peevish and angry. He repulsed his mother savagely, as he had never done before. The tears came to her eyes. She felt his unfeeling cuts keenly, but only

The Conversion of Hamilton Wheeler

changed her pressure to entreaties. At last he blurted out that he had been to the revival. Only then did Mrs. Wheeler desist.

Now realizing that a great and morbid change had come upon her boy, and observing, moreover, that perhaps she herself was the cause of his leaving his breakfast almost untouched, Mrs. Wheeler put her arm around him, kissed him, and remarking that he was ill, insisted that he should return to his bed and remain there over Sunday, if necessary, to insure full recuperation before resuming his school work.

Hamilton rolled and tossed in his bed, restless and agitated, stewing and worrying over the unfortunate position that fate had cast for him. He could do nothing but await developments in suspense. If the worst came to the worst, he could but make the best of it in crossing the bridge when he reached it.

His mother darkened the room, hoping he could sleep. Sleep he needed badly enough, but sleep he could not. After a half day of boredom, Hamilton determined that he would feel better up and about than in bed. Quietly he arose, dressed, and sought the morning paper in the living room. Shortly Mrs. Wheeler appeared. Having gotten lunch ready she had started toward Hamilton's room to determine if he was awake, and would have his lunch in bed. At first she did not notice Hamilton sitting by the window, but the sound of the rustle of his paper attracted her attention. She turned, and announced lunch.

The Conversion of Hamilton Wheeler

Hamilton had now regained his composure. His morning rest in bed had recuperated him despite the fact that he did not sleep. Mrs. Wheeler was careful not to irritate or cross him. Her experience with that, so recent and vivid, would not permit her to repeat it. She now hoped it was a closed event and a few days would see it a forgotten one. From that day onward, neither Mrs. Wheeler nor Hamilton mentioned it. Mrs. Wheeler recalled that Hamilton was unstrung, as it were, by the last revival meeting he attended, and she resolved that if she could help it he should not attend another.

After a few days Hamilton had in a measure recovered his former spirit, largely through the benefits derived from daily walks up and down the beautiful Riverside Drive in company with his mother. Mrs. Wheeler noted one great change in his demeanor, however, namely that he exhibited an interest in the girls, which she had never noticed before. One day she caught him closely eying a pretty girl as though hoping to catch her eye in flirtation. Suddenly he seemed to be conscious that his mother was observing him, and he turned his gaze to a conveniently passing river boat. She, however, was not oblivious to his changed moral demeanor.

Hamilton had been generous to a fault. Now he exhibited a considerable degree of selfishness. His whole thought had been entirely for others. Now he had himself always in mind. He thought not only of his

The Conversion of Hamilton Wheeler

mortal existence, but of its eternal perpetuation. Self-love and self-pity possessed his whole mind. Whereas he had been always patient and tolerant, he had now become impatient, petulant, and intolerant. Where he was brave and manly, he was now disposed to cowardice and timidity. Whereas he had been absolutely reliable and honest, he now was disposed to escape straightforwardness.

He had been always ready to do an act of kindness or generosity, now his whole thought was to escape it. He had always been so reasonable, so thoughtful and considerate. Now he was impulsive, acted rashly, and foolishly. He acted first, and thought and regretted afterward. Whereas he had been strong and resolute, now he had become weak, fickle, vacillating, and irresolute. His old-time sincerity, loyalty, and staunchness, were succeeded by insincerity, disloyalty, unfaithfulness, treachery, and hypocrisy. He had become whimsical, capricious, fitful, fanciful, freakish, eccentric, erratic, frivolous, and wayward. He became as tyrannical as he was unenduring and intolerant. Such was the conversion of character which was now the task of medical science to eradicate.

The Conversion of Hamilton Wheeler

Chapter V.

MRS. WHEELER had for some time observed the progressive deterioration in Hamilton's character, and his mental and physical condition with alarm, but breathed it to no one. The last developments, however, caused her to hurry to her venerable uncle, the eminent alienist and neurologist, Dr. Austin. After a short wait, hardly permitting her to regain her composure, she was admitted into the private office.

Mrs. Wheeler lost no time in laying bare her son's case to her uncle, detailing at length all the changes and manifestations which had characterized the history, as she then knew it, from the fated first night at the revival; and Dr. Austin was not dilatory in asking questions to bring out the salient points of the clinical history that Mrs. Wheeler had not thought to mention.

Finally she came to a stopping place in her story, and Dr. Austin paused as though in deep thought. As he sat in silence, one could observe a curling of his lip, a frown, a clench of his fist. His face colored, and his whole figure showed he was angry. Finally he broke the suspense with the oath: "These d—d evangelists ought to be strung up."

"Let us understand first of all that an evangelist is a man, and that the function of the successful evangelist, as I see it, is the artful production of an abnormal state of the mind, followed by taking methodical advantage

The Conversion of Hamilton Wheeler

of his victim, while in that condition, to stampede him into becoming an evangelical church supporter. Moreover, the manifest design and object of this social and physical crime, is the conversion of a man or woman into a living working automaton, a super-impressionable, suggestible, and credulous individual who will ever afterward be susceptible and subject to control by others, and in especial connection with the religious dogmas which are impressed during the most suggestible period directly following the conversion.

"The fundamental emotions aroused in his auditors by the successful evangelist are directly and essentially *depressive*. Among them are fear, pathos, anguish, despair, dread, and panic, while a reaction exaltation is the only escape afforded. The victim remains paralyzed in the depths of the depression until he grasps the straw dangled in his face, and emerges from his gloom to an opposite emotion of exaltation. This transition thus affords a way out from the tensional oppressive to relaxed states. The victim is released, as it were, from a state of tetany or cramp, to one of motor freedom, when he 'hits the trail' (passing down to the front of the house) to activity. The expansive follows the contracted (depressed) ideas, and maniacal exaltation and delusions of grandeur are the first symptoms of unbalancing of the mind, when that degree of abnormality obtains.

"We hesitate to believe any wrong could be done in behalf of religion, but few are so ignorant or so ob-

The Conversion of Hamilton Wheeler

tuse as to be unable to comprehend that the fundamental object of revivals is the rehabilitation of the church membership, and at bottom the recruiting of its finances. The larger the congregation, the larger is the minister's salary, and in general the larger is the clientele of the older membership among the merchants and professional men. The political power of the church and its members and the prestige of the clergy is also correspondingly increased. That is why revivals are conducted by the evangelical churches regardless of their other consequences, and why the public tolerance of them is so great. Bear in mind also that most of the victims of broken wills of revival causation, continue slaves to the crowd psychology of their connected church congregations. If the anti-Catholic writers and speakers were not so ignorant of crowd psychology they would not be so amazed at the priest-incited mob violations of their public speakers, which end in murder and destruction of property. Not until our country renews its pledge to a religious liberty, which shall not be interpreted as religious license, but conversely as freedom from the curse of license, will we again enjoy true national independence."

Dr. Austin paused thoughtfully, then continued: "What concerns us now is the blight which has been visited upon Hamilton. We must let the public fight its own battle, and bend our efforts to whatever is possible for Hamilton.

"Now, my dear niece, I appreciate only too well how

The Conversion of Hamilton Wheeler

much you need encouragement and optimism rather than pessimism, but we cannot afford to ignore the situation which demands our best attention and efforts, for the sake of sparing ourselves solicitous anxiety. That is already another grievous fault of our times. If you will bury yourself now in the whole-souled task of rebuilding this boy who has been so cruelly rent and mangled, you will recruit your own nerve and poise quicker than by the opposite course of ignoring it in a selfish ambition to save yourself.

"I first want you to realize that Hamilton has been rendered what we call a hyperesthetic. The super-sensitiveness to every noise and source of irritation, the super-irritability and super-excitability, which are among his symptoms, must be allayed and subdued, not by more force or shock, but by avoiding them. We must not break down his will any farther. Don't antagonize him any more than you can help. Try to govern him by kindly influence rather than unyielding discipline. Avoid exciting and irritating him. When he is especially unreasonable and quarrelsome, endeavor to reason with him without irritation on your part, and thus soothe him. Remember his disposition to impulsiveness is closely related to the other symptoms I have just described to you. Rash acts are its fruits. He can resume sustained and enduring reasoning and reasonable thoughts and acts only after he recovers from the distressing sensorial shocks and knockout blows he has experienced.

"The super-susceptibility and suggestibility, the re-

The Conversion of Hamilton Wheeler

sults of the evangelist's browbeating and shock producing tactics, the instilling of fear and even terror, the paralyzing effect on the will, etc., are pathological concomitants of the other described manifestations. These, however, you will find useful in the control of Hamilton when he is disposed to outbursts of passion. I would caution you, however, that great care must be taken in handling him with these now dangerous weapons. Bear in mind always, that the results already obtained in breaking down the will, have correspondingly weakened his resistance to the importunities of those with whom he will come in contact the rest of his life. He will be super-susceptible to the propositions of all manner of confidence men, goldbrick swindlers, and the like. He will be what they call an *easy mark*, while his general credulity will make him a marked man by all the varieties of isms and cults. Worse than all, he will now be even more susceptible to later revivalism. For that reason he must be shielded from attendance on future revivals and from the emotional sort of church services. Unfortunately he has already, while in the conversion ecstasy, signed a card giving his name and address, which will probably be followed up by some of the agents engaged in whipping the converted into church membership rolls. If so, you must turn them away without their seeing him.

"An essential result of religious emotional excitement is disturbance of equilibrium, of mental balance, of a state of poise, with a tendency to instability which

The Conversion of Hamilton Wheeler

involves a disposition to deviate to both extremes, to exaltation on the one hand and to depression on the other, which characterizes a type of insanity as its end result. This state of lunacy is appropriately named as representing the lateral extremes of these states which alternately hold sway, namely: manic-depressive insanity, and is the commonest type of insanity proceeding from this cause. The most typical features are *instability* as the predisposing condition, and the disappearance of the intermediate mental status of equilibrium. It is a state of fluctuation from one extreme type to another, and therefore of frequent periods of more or less mental unbalance.

“Perhaps the best illustration of the normal and abnormal processes involved in sensorial impressions is to be found in the simple laws of reaction of living substance in general. If we take a living frog’s leg and impart to it any form of physical stimulus, such as chemical, electrical, thermal, photic, or mechanical, equal in volume and intensity to the physiological impulses, we obtain a contractile reaction. However, if we give it a succession of such stimuli, each succeeding one following the preceding so closely that extension has not had time to follow each contraction, the muscle remains contracted, and as the stimulus continues to be adduced the contraction tightens, and eventually the muscle dies strangled in the stage of contraction. Again, if instead of a frequent succession of stimulations we give a similar succession of hard blows, a single contraction is produced which is not fol-

The Conversion of Hamilton Wheeler

lowed by relaxation, but which is succeeded by a tetanic rigidity which merges into *rigor mortis*.

"A bombardment of violently abnormal sense impressions, such as modern evangelism affords, does not permit of each stimulus experiencing an individual normal reaction, which in this case would be over a wide distribution of interaction with associated tissue areas carrying impressions of past experiences. We observe, that as a sequence of such bombardments, the full concert of representations of these past experiences, so necessary to normal deliberation, is seriously lacking concomitant to more or less muscular transfixation which is indicative of tetany of the superficial contractile tissues of the body, and of the coincident inhibition of full conscious reasoning.

"The nervous tissues which are not contractile to any appreciable extent, however unable to exhibit active contractile phenomena, as I have described in the other cases, yet do exhibit deterioration from the same cause by loss of tissue density, which involves an abnormal facility of transmission of subsequent sense impulses, and therefore augments the predisposition to their precocious and excessive reactions, which are due to the operation of the law of repetition as applied to physiology. Other applications which I will give later, will further illustrate the operations of this law. Let us now pass on to a consideration of the Evangelist's series of psychological processes.

"The more intense the excessive impetus of stimuli

The Conversion of Hamilton Wheeler

producing an impression, the more confused and defective will be the picture of the outside world which is produced by it. Long periods of sustained attention, maintained by antics of movement and a continuous jargon of chaotic jumbles of affirmations of vague and mystical things, not only produce fatigue of the attention, but desultory confusion, leading to discontinuity and incoordination of thought. Fatigue and shock alone are productive of a blunting of special sense perception, and thus for any unit intensity of stimuli the mental picture will be correspondingly confused and defective.

“Paradoxically, the exhibited facility of mental perception and emotional expression are in inverse ratio, one to another. The super-emotional facility of reaction in fact appears to replace and thus inhibit the more perfect and complete forms of perception. Thus intense emotions of sorrow and fear are active producers of falsification of ideas.

“Not infrequently intense emotions are wrought by sense impressions, which are equally confused and defective. Police authorities know only too well how poor an account of an event is usually given by persons experiencing great simultaneous emotion. It is both confused and defective. The same is the case with emotional religious conversions, the converts are bereft of any intellectual concepts. They are simply victims of emotional collapse and surrender. Even the surrender has no religious significance, and all depends

The Conversion of Hamilton Wheeler

upon later taking advantage of the credulity of the general super-impressionability and super-suggestibility thus produced, which also exposes the victim to other and possibly more unscrupulous operators quite as much as to the religious ones. The involved loss of capacity for continuity of thought also finds expression in a morbid distractibility, owing to which goal attainments are made both mentally and physically impossible, or incomplete.

"The so-called pure mental perceptions are such sense impressions as have come to the sensorium, (with or without commanding full conscious attention to their attainment of sensory reaction), and have not been productive of any kind of motor reaction. Many conscious perceptions do not create motor reaction. Man, less than any other animal, reacts to general environmental perturbations, and domesticated animals much less than wild ones. Man cultivates and extends the capacity for pure perception, or as we call it intellectual receptivity, as independent of motor reactions. A certain amount of it is compatible with normality, but we are just beginning to learn that in compensation for independent perceptive activity, we must have alternative motor activity or physical exercise. We must, in fact, compensate in physical exercise for our mental operations.

"Whenever the perceptive faculties are worked much out of proportion to the exercise of the motor organs, we attain an unstable or emotional state. As an ex-

The Conversion of Hamilton Wheeler

ample of this, witness the high degree of perceptive excesses of the sedentary student, of which Hamilton is an example, and the dramatic presentation of scenes and events that are most highly productive of motor reactions, which we witness in opera chairs, in motor passivity, experiencing only those suppressed reactions of the motor organs (the muscular system) which we call thrills, and are productive of states of motor tension which are often wrought to the breaking point.

"After the breaking up of the normal stability or stamina of body equilibrium, in the evangelistic production of the condition that is commonly called *instability*, we have a weakened state in which the victim is emotionally predisposed, and prone on slight or no perceptible provocation to inordinate levity, hysterical laughter, light-headed frivolity, and to abrupt changes to tears and sobbing from the same causes. Such are the physical manifestations which pass current under the common name of hysteria.

"Since hysteria has been generally regarded as a functional, rather than organic disease, and it occurs so frequently, especially in the weaker women, and so much as by-symptoms of other and more serious diseases, of which it is a concomitant exacerbation manifestation, it has been neglected by the medical profession and largely relegated to 'Christian Scientists,' other similar cults, and to Sanitariums. The latter including asylums for the insane.

"Moreover, in private practice, this is one of the

The Conversion of Hamilton Wheeler

most unsatisfactory diseases to treat, for the reason that such patients are unreliable as to their case histories, as to their following of physician's directions, the following up any prescribed course of treatment, and in excluding from their experiences disturbing and exciting factors of exacerbation.

"Hysterical individuals are notorious as liars, thieves, moral renegades, etc., in all respects regarding common honesty and social intercourse. They are tyrants, oblivious of the rights and feelings of others, and are distinctly prone to alcoholic and drug addictions. They are so disposed to intrigues, subterfuges, and malicious trickery, that no one about them is safe. With these they combine the most fanatical religious dispositions, and are therefore the arch hypocrites in the eyes of all those with whom they come in contact.

"They lie when it is as easy to tell the truth. They fabricate great yarns out of pure imagination. They shoplift and steal from their best friends when they already have more than they can use in a lifetime. With ideal wedded mates they indulge in outside secret and illicit love. They are entirely untrustworthy in marital, social, or financial relations. Physicians, nurses, and servants are constantly subject to all manner of unjust and unwarranted accusations. Those nearest and dearest to them are not exempt. It is quite impossible for them to play a social game of cards without cheating. Sudden changes from excessive love to rabid hatred, is as easy as from laughter

The Conversion of Hamilton Wheeler

to tears. Even the most woman-worshipped and pampered clergymen suddenly find themselves accused of the vilest of crimes by this class of their parishioners.

"America, the land of the free and the principal victim of the revival crime, especially dating from the 'Great Awakening' of 1800 in Kentucky, and the 'burnt district' of 1832 in New England, so notorious for their developments of criminal and immoral manifestations, has become the recognized land of hysteria and neurasthenia, 'the great American disease' of medical writers. This subject of observation and remark by many noted authors did not escape the conservative Sir James Bryce, in his work 'The American Commonwealth.' He observed: 'All denominations in the United States are more prone to emotionalism in religion and have less reserve in displaying it than in England and Scotland.'

"Is it not time that we were inquiring into the causes of such a state of affairs? It is not because of a preponderance of Latin or Celtic blood, for in this respect we exceed the Irish, the Spanish, and the Italians. The Sicilians, Greeks, Syrians, and other Eastern and Southern Mediterranean countrymen who come to our shores, are all more stable than we, or we would not tolerate them. Even the Jews do not work themselves up into these destroying religious hysterias in our age. In fact, nothing compares with it since the crusades, and the dancing and flagellation epidemics of the Middle Ages. Our country is indeed revisited by a revival

The Conversion of Hamilton Wheeler

epidemic, a plague, which is converting the whole nation into a new burnt district.

"When this revival pest broke out anew a decade ago, we were just recovering from a long period of political campaigns that were nothing less than great hysterical and fanatical outbursts, and of a series of equally barbaric manifestations connected with all industrial and financial readjustments, in which anarchy and panic reigned.

"We have passed through a period of political and financial corruption, which has been exceeded by none in history. Our narcotic drug and alcoholic consumption has been no less than staggering. Our vices became so prodigious that the supply of human material exhausted the resources of the rest of the civilized and half civilized world.

"We had just been gradually coming to our senses in the exposing, curbing, and subduing of corruption, vice, and crime, and were becoming sane politically, financially, and industrially, when like a great conflagration the churches determined upon a course to rehabilitate their congregations, that had been dwindling parallel with the oncoming general sanity of the people, and desperately turned to professional revivalists who were willing to again hysterize our people to subserve their purposes.

"Our misfortune, in Hamilton's case, is but one of hundreds of thousands that this epidemic will cause before it comes to an end, and little of which will ever see the light of publicity.

The Conversion of Hamilton Wheeler

"As a basis of what you need to understand of this subject, let us first comprehend that emotion is a *physical* manifestation. Over stimulus and exercise of the mental impulses at the expense of or without coincident exercise of the physical or motor reactions, are productive of a corresponding state of disequilibrium between what we call the mental and physical factors of our life histories.

"The production of such a state of disequilibrium between the mental and the physical reactions is responsible for a corresponding production of an explosive type of motor instability, which in turn is a state verging upon a breaking integrity of physical endurance. The ultimate explosion represents the release of the tension: the hysterical outburst.

"The segregated mechanical process of conversion is one of *sudden* release from high pressure. If the release is gradual, the typical features are absent, and the end is defeated. The explosive-like phenomenon of conversion is attained by exceeding an individual's capacity to withstand the stress to which he is subjected. The time factor and the ease or difficulty of attainment, depends upon the emotionalism and stamina, or stability of the subject. The greater the instability, the earlier is the capacity limit reached and the explosive event attained. Those who are immune are those who exhibit the capacity to maintain their integrity against the imposed stress.

"The closest mechanical analogy to conversion is

The Conversion of Hamilton Wheeler

probably the process of 'puffing' whole cereals. They are heated to high thermic expansive pressure in a confined space, and the pressure is abruptly released while at the maximum point of the heat expansive pressure. The puffing is attained by the explosive violence occurring on the sudden release of the thermic stress. If the heat and stress are permitted to decline prior to release, the puffing will lessen in direct ratio to the fall of temperature until cooling is complete. The same is the case in event of gradual decline of stress with revival congregations. The cereal will, however, after heating, never fully return to its former density, and will more readily respond to subsequent heat expansions, and will thus explosively expand on sudden release at progressively lower temperatures at each subsequent heating by virtue of the thus caused progressive reduction in the integrity of its integration. This physical law is also operative in those frequenters of revivals who succumb sooner or later.

The loss of density involves in both the vegetable (cereal) and the animal living tissue, a corresponding loss of integrity of integration, both alike exhibiting a lowered resistance to physical stress which corresponds to the loss of density of their substance. The more is any substance, (living or non-living, animal or vegetable), expanded by any means, the greater is its proclivity to attain to explosive disintegration from any single cause, and in an individual the greater is his subsequent irritable weakness, plasticity, credulity, and susceptibility to future convulsive conversions.

The Conversion of Hamilton Wheeler

"We may perhaps best understand this if we begin with the simplest form of reaction of the living substance which composes our functioning bodies. The simplest form of response or reaction to any perturbation from without, is attended directly by simple contraction. In complex and higher animals the perturbation is conducted through the medium of one or more of the organs of the five senses. Thus all perturbations from without the body come as sensory impulses, the most direct and simple form of reaction of which is by the shortest nerve route, and is termed reflex action. The most primitive and natural reaction is the most direct and immediate as exhibited by motor function, manifested in alternate contraction and relaxation. There are, however, sometimes many inequalities between these actions."

Here Mrs. Wheeler observed: "This experience of Hamilton's has served to focus in my mind a number of questions which have long been enigmas to me. In fact, the data of many of them has been so fragmentary that the facts were lost to any assembled consideration. What you have already told me has led to some degree of coordination of much chaotic and vague information.

"As long as I can remember, I have heard of hysteria vaguely mentioned as an expression of fright, and perhaps as some obscure kind of a disease, but I never thought of a vivid picturization of the terror of death or revivalism as a cause, nor have I connected

The Conversion of Hamilton Wheeler

emotion definitely with hysteria. Emotions of passion, anger, and hate, of love, grief, and religion, I always thought of separately. Perhaps most of us have pictured the emotional actress as a type giving greater expressiveness of love, hate, grief, etc. However, your little talks on these subjects, since Hamilton's sad experience with them, have proved most illuminating to me, and gradually I am becoming conversant with facts which I am sure are most important and vital to everyone to know, yet I fear it is ruthlessly removing the veil of the cherished mysteries of life, and I shall lose my religion thereby."

"You should not feel that way about it, my dear," responded Dr. Austin. "That is the very idea regarding these things that is responsible for much harm. As you say, the available information on the subject is indeed badly scattered, and most fragmentary at that, but even if it were ideally collated, and coordinated, you probably would never condescend to read it, for the very reason you have expressed, the fear that it might appeal too greatly to your reason. You, like many others, regard it as a sort of sacrilege to permit yourself to know something which might unsettle your belief in something else, or prove it false. That is a sad frame of mind for any one to get into. You must see it is abnormal.

"The Encyclopaedia Biblica, the most reliable and scholarly biblical dictionary in existence, the product of the best scholars of the Church of England, and

The Conversion of Hamilton Wheeler

the authority of our own Episcopal Church, would open your eyes. Another work, 'The Bible for Learners,' would also give you some of the results of the *Higher Criticism*, without taking away your religion perhaps, but they would prepare your mind to receive and understand the great truths I am trying to help you to consider on their own merits."

"Enough of that, Uncle," interjected Mrs. Wheeler, "don't think for one minute that I doubt what you tell me, or that I don't want to hear it, for I do. I want all the information it will please you to give me, regardless of past beliefs."

"I don't think you doubt what I tell you," responded Dr. Austin, "but no one knows better than I the hold religion exerts over one who has been brought up by such a good, but unsophisticated old soul as your mother. She never discriminated, because she never knew anything else. Few did in her time. Had we lived in her generation, we too would have believed as she did, but you must not be governed by that. In my early days we were without many of the electrical and mechanical devices which are now in everyday use, yet we are now glad to have them. Your father died in the faith nearly thirty years ago, and if I had died then it would have been the same with me. It is because I survived that I progressed."

Mrs. Wheeler arose, and approaching her Uncle, said affectionately: "Uncle dear, if you knew how much I love, honor, and respect you, you would not find all that

The Conversion of Hamilton Wheeler

vindication necessary, but I see your point. I must go now, but don't permit yourself to think I am hurried by anything you have said. I have already imposed on your time as well as overstayed the hour I should have returned to assume my duties at home.

"Good-bye," she said, as she leaned forward and planted a kiss on her uncle's forehead. Then hurrying to the door, she passed on her way home.

The Conversion of Hamilton Wheeler

Chapter VI.

HAMILTON had retired late after a long siege of getting an unusually arduous assignment of lessons. Since his last revival experience, he found his mental powers much impaired. He was as receptive as ever, even more so, but he was slower and duller of comprehension. He was more transient, his learning did not become a part of himself as it did before. He could obtain good marks if he could recite within an hour or so after going over it. To memorize, however, for the next day's recitations caused him to go over and over it, then again review it the next morning.

It was most noticeable that a class of work entailing reasoning out problems, demanding prolonged attention and consecutive thinking, was much more laborious. He didn't have the ability to grapple with difficult problems nor the endurance of sustained effort. He found constant renewals of effort necessary to maintain any degree of continuance of study. There were incessant diversions from the themes and subjects of his labors. Every little thing annoyed and diverted him. His thoughts were broken and fugitive in nature. Discontinuity was so pronounced that it required an hour or more to do what he formerly accomplished in a half hour.

After retiring at the end of his evening's labors, he was so agitated he could not sleep. He was lying in

The Conversion of Hamilton Wheeler

bed with the room dark, other than a dim light shining in the open window, when he was startled at the sound of someone moving about sneakily in the adjoining room. Hamilton knew it could not be his mother for she had been asleep for several hours, and even should she get up to go into the room adjoining his own, she would be sure to turn on the light.

Suddenly he saw a flash of light which he knew must be that of a dark lantern. Cautiously slipping out of bed, he stepped behind the open door of his room and peeped through the wide opening between the door and the casing. A dark figure was creeping about, flashing a lantern from time to time in an effort to get the bearings of the apartment.

Finally the visitor, throwing the light into the open doorway of Hamilton's room, advanced towards it. As soon as he reached the threshold he appeared to observe the bed clothing thrown back as though by a recent occupant. Hesitating a moment, he drew a gun from his pocket, then advanced into the room, looking to the right and left and under the bed. Hamilton knew it would be but a moment when he should be discovered behind the door, and as the intruder stooped to look beneath the bed, he slipped around the door into the other room, pulled the door closed after him and turned the key. He then hurried into his mother's room, obtained his father's loaded revolver from a bureau drawer, and returning to the intermediate room, turned on the electric light, and turned the

The Conversion of Hamilton Wheeler

key, unlocking the door opening into his room. As soon as he heard a hand on the knob, he aimed his pistol at a point where one coming out would first appear, and the moment the door opened he called as sternly as he could, "*Throw up your hands.*" The burglar's astonishment was so complete as he looked into the barrel of the revolver that up went both hands, the dark lantern in one hand and the other from the knob.

With the glare of four Mazda lamps from the center fixture shining full in the face of the intruder, Hamilton at once recognized him as Tom Young, a former schoolboy friend, and the same who accompanied him in his second revival experience.

For a brief moment Hamilton was in a quandary what to do. An ugly looking gun protruding from Tom's right coat pocket did not look very inviting. He must get that gun away from Tom while he had the "drop" on him. As he hesitated for means to accomplish that object, Mrs. Wheeler, awakened by the sound of Hamilton's emphatic command to "throw up hands," crept out in a dressing gown to see what the disturbance was. As soon as she obtained a view of the intruder, she also saw it was Tom. Before she could ask a question Hamilton requested her to take the gun from Tom's pocket while he held his "bead" on him. Mrs. Wheeler circled around timidly to the right side of Tom, and then reaching at arm's length took hold of the handle of the gun between her thumb and forefinger and lifted it from his pocket, until she could clasp it with the other hand.

The Conversion of Hamilton Wheeler

Tom stood pale as a ghost all during this procedure, not a word was spoken by either him or Hamilton. Twice he would have lowered his arms, but each time Hamilton corrected his aim at his chest and Tom's hands immediately went higher again. As soon as his mother had the weapon in hand, Hamilton's gun came down to his side, and seating himself he requested Tom to do the same, which the latter did with some alacrity.

Hamilton sank into his chair as one exhausted, he looked dazed. He was as white as a sheet. He looked at Tom at first as though he wanted to speak and couldn't. Finally Tom broke the painful silence by stuttering something to the effect that he had gotten into the wrong apartment. Hamilton looked at him as though perplexed, but Mrs. Wheeler inquired incredulously: "What! with a revolver and dark lantern? That will not do, Tom, you came into this house at such a time of night as a burglar, to rob us during sleep. We are not fools. You must be given over to the police. I will call up the station," she said impatiently as she arose.

Hamilton promptly called: "Wait a moment, mother. I want to talk to Tom before you do that."

Tom twitched and moved restlessly in his chair fearing a drastic third degree, but such a thing was not on the program. Hamilton inquired pathetically: "Tom, tell me what got you into this business? I supposed since we were at the revival together, from the sincere manner, in which you participated in it, and ex-

The Conversion of Hamilton Wheeler

perienced conversion, that you had really been born again and entered a religious life."

"So I had," retorted Tom, "but you don't understand. I have always been religious. I am now. I have been converted several times before—by the Salvation Army, and Jerry McAuley's missions. Practically all the yeggs I know are just as religious as you. People make a mistake when they think that because of the nature of our business we are not religious, or are heartless men. I tell you we are as big-hearted a class of men as you will find anywhere. One yegg will defend another with his life, and when one is sent up the road or to the chair, his wife and children never suffer. I don't believe I ever met a yegg who was not religious. Our oaths to each other are more truly religious, and are more religiously kept than any others in the world. A masonic oath is not in it by the side of ours. We seldom go back on our oaths. He who does is a dead man, believe me.

"You know how soldiers on a fighting front become religious. You perhaps realize that their continual risk of life and the frequent presence of death has a lot to do with it, but you don't seem to think that they are killing any one. They kill thousands to our one. We kill only in self defense. Our sins are forgiven in answer to our prayers. If Jesus saves, he saves us, for we believe and we have the same promise of everlasting life that you have. Any yegg can tell you that Jesus and the disciples stole corn on Sunday, and Jesus ap-

The Conversion of Hamilton Wheeler

proved it. You leave it to us. We know what we are about."

Hamilton and his mother sat horror-stricken at Tom's recital. They did not know what to make of it. They had never heard the like of it before—such an alleged partnership between religion and crime. Not the crime of a rash act, or of misfortune and starvation, but that of professional thieves, highway-men, and burglars, whose getaway justifies murder whenever their victim stands between them and liberty.

Hamilton was nonplussed, too astonished to speak. He felt a sensation as of a ball in his throat, which caused him to indulge in laborious swallowing to admit of a continuation of respiration. At last he found voice to ask Tom how long he had been a yegg. The latter answered: "Ever since I was a little kid I have helped to pull off jobs. I joined a yegg club and finally helped to put over partnership deals. At first I acted as lookout, but later I did inside work."

"And you were a professional yegg when you went with me to the revival that night?" asked Hamilton.

"Why certainly," responded Tom. "On account of our little lark I nearly missed a date to go out with a bunch, but they waited till I came, although they thought I had given them the go-by."

"And you pulled off a burglary that night?" inquired Hamilton.

"Certainly," answered Tom. "I was just going

The Conversion of Hamilton Wheeler

around to size up the situation when I met you. That was one job that we tackled without a preliminary."

"Oh, Hamilton!" impetuously ejaculated Mrs. Wheeler, "Tom is a regular burglar, and I must call the police at once to take him away."

"No mother, I am going to let Tom go when I am through with him. I want to talk with him first, then—then I am going to tell him to go and sin no more." A faint smile stole across Tom's face. He was not afraid of Hamilton so long as he had a story about Hamilton that had not yet been told.

Hamilton was fearful that the one knowing his secret so intimately, being such an unscrupulous man, would make the worst possible use of it. Blackmail is as common, and often more to be feared than burglary. Tom was in position to make Hamilton a lot of trouble, and make it cost his mother or his uncle a lot of money. He could not afford to make a misstep at this time.

Turning to his mother Hamilton said: "Mother, I want to have a confidential talk with Tom, and perhaps it will be less embarrassing if you retire."

Mrs. Wheeler looked searchingly at Tom and then at Hamilton, then replied: "I will go, and I hope you do your utmost to make Tom see the error of his ways. Though he may be already *religious*, certainly he yet needs to be converted to righteousness. Good night, Tom. I trust you will see the evil of your ways and make this your last burglary."

The Conversion of Hamilton Wheeler

"Good night, Mrs. Wheeler," responded Tom with a grin, "thank you for your good wishes."

As soon as all was quiet, Hamilton beckoned Tom to the living room, farther from Mrs. Wheeler's room, and gestured to him to be seated. Then he said gravely: "Tom, I had the bead on you, and if I had killed you here in our apartment with your gun and dark lantern, no one would have blamed me. In fact, I would have been hailed as a hero for killing a burglar in the act of robbing our home. I would have put an end to you, and dead men tell no stories. I did not do it, not because I could not, Tom, but because it was you. Even though you were willing to rob us and share the plunder with another or others, I could not kill you. All the years I have known you, and in ignorance of your secret vocation, I have had a warm feeling in my heart for you, which is not easy to dispel. You have said that you yeggmen are so religious and so religiously keep your oaths, I am going to give you your freedom provided that you take an oath on the Bible never to tell to anyone of the evening we spent together, between the revival and Brooklyn, and that from this day you will never commit burglary again."

Tom hesitated—stared blankly a few moments—then replied: "Hamilton, I will swear to the first all right, but the second is not as easy to keep. You see I have tried many times before to do that very thing. I am in with the gang. I have always undertaken a new job after making a resolution or promising somebody I

The Conversion of Hamilton Wheeler

would never do it again. You must remember that when a fellow gets in once, he gets in the strongest possible oath-bound attachments. Every man is bound to the organization, which is like a labor union, only worse. He is worse than a scab if he ever quits. Once enlisted, he is subject to call, like a soldier. Hauls have to be made and participation is obligatory to provide for the fraternal benevolences."

Hamilton, who had been intently listening to Tom's narration of the ways of yeggmen, was truly dumfounded. He commented: "So the saying that: *the worst of men are not all bad*, is very true, but if you fellows would but work half as hard, tax your minds half as much for ingenuity, and go straight, you would have much less than half as much charity to maintain. It would seem, with all your organizations, that yeggmen would be easy to reach and to deal with collectively by uplift societies."

"In one way they would," responded Tom. "We are known, not only to the police, politicians, and by many others, but by social workers, settlement workers. We have our Angels of Mercy who devote their lives to us. They help us when we are broke and help in keeping up our charities when we fall down on them. They come in and pray with us. Like many others, they seem to think we are not religious enough, and if we were only more so we would brace up. They come in and work us all up into hysterias, so we have to tank up after it. They never seem to understand that

The Conversion of Hamilton Wheeler

we are already more religious than they are, so they continue in the same old way, year in and year out. We like it all right, so long as it doesn't interfere with pulling off a job. Sometimes we have to get rid of them on that account."

What a mixture of the sublime, and of infamy and criminality thought Hamilton. "Why," he observed, "do not these politicians, police, and others, put a stop to it if they are so intimate with it all the time?"

"Because," retorted Tom, "the men whom you put in all your public offices are so corrupt that they are worse than we are. They tax us, but do not disturb us otherwise. Whenever they want a trick pulled for them, at election time, to pack a meeting, to stampede a district, to make a demonstration, to put someone out of the way, they call on us. We have to pay our debts to them then. Some officers hit us so hard for dough, we have to pull off a few extra jobs to get the wherewithal."

Hamilton arose, and offering his hand to Tom, said: "Tom, you certainly are in a bad mixup. If ever I can help you to separate yourself from your criminal associates and begin a new life, let me know. I will do what I can, and will ask aid of others in your behalf."

Tom stood motionless till Hamilton had finished, then grasped his hand heartily and said with trembling and sobbing tones: "I wish I could say now I would accept your kind offer, but I must make my change more slowly. As soon as I reach the street my lookouts will

The Conversion of Hamilton Wheeler

not believe me when I tell them I have no swag to divide. I will tell you the outcome later."

As Tom was now ready to start out to join his yegg associates Hamilton called to his mother to bring in a small Bible which was in an adjoining room. Mrs. Wheeler complied as soon as she could slip on her dressing gown again, and handing the volume to Hamilton, returned to her room. Tom now placed his hand upon the book which lay on Hamilton's outstretched palm, and took a solemn oath strictly according to his agreement, and then reverently leaned forward and kissed the book as he removed his hand.

Tom now picked up his hat and started toward the door. Hamilton thought of the gun which his mother had laid on the table in the other room, and as Tom opened the outer door he called to him: "Haven't you forgotten something?"

Tom looked blankly a moment and exclaimed: "Oh, yes, the gun. I may need that to get home on. The men outside are armed, and I have been gone so long they will probably accuse me of hiding the swag to avoid dividing with the gang."

Hamilton had first thought of emptying it of its cartridges before delivering it to Tom, but finally handed it to him as it was. Tom looked into the cylinder to see if its loads were intact, and seeing that they were, he thrust it into his pocket and crept noiselessly down the stairs.

Hamilton now turned back to his room and flung

The Conversion of Hamilton Wheeler

himself into his bed. The excitement of the occasion had served to nerve him up to its demands, but now he was all in. His collapse was apparent, and his present exhaustion was complete. He soon fell into a heavy and labored sleep which carried him late into the morning before Mrs. Wheeler came to awaken him. After his breakfast he felt somewhat better, but even then he experienced a continual sense of irritable weakness and of exhaustion.

All day Hamilton was dazed. He could hardly believe his own senses. It all seemed like a dream. How could one be at once so criminal and so religious? He had always been taught to regard religion and morals as practically one and the same, and one as inseparable from the other. Such could not have been the case with Tom. He was a professional criminal, and yet more religious than Hamilton ever dreamed of being. Tom's religion put Hamilton's to shame, and yet thought he, he is a professional burglar.

Hamilton was so completely dumfounded he could not rest until he had looked up the Criminal in some authoritative work. In the afternoon he hurried over to the nearest Carnegie branch of the New York Public Library. At the desk he asked for the best popular work on the Criminal. The obliging librarian delivered to him a copy of Havelock Ellis's work *The Criminal*, of the Contemporary Scientific Series. Hamilton sat down at once and turned over the leaves nervously without avail, then opening the index he was

The Conversion of Hamilton Wheeler

led to pages which explained the whole paradox. Hamilton looked aghast at the open book. There it was, not designed to meet his exigency, yet it read that innate criminals are innately and naturally religious.

The Conversion of Hamilton Wheeler

Chapter VII.

BOYLIKE, Hamilton had now forgotten the ill effects of his revival experiences. He was feeling fairly well again, and at week ends, after a five days' stretch of unremittent sedentary school work, he was aching for relaxation and diversion. His experience with the girl he accompanied home from the revival service, on his last attendance, had not brought any serious results, so far as he knew. He was ready for another venture when a month had rolled around, and on another Friday night he sought his school friend Douglas Everts to accompany him on another visit to the tabernacle.

Douglas Everts was a very different type of boy from either of Hamilton's last companions. He was a manly young fellow with a fine sense of high grade good fellowship. He had little sex interest in the girls, though he was fond of tennis bouts with the boys and girls equally divided. He was gallant and polite to the fair sex in general, but it ended there. At the revival he was always respectful of the religious sentiments of the others, though he had been brought up a skeptic.

On this occasion Hamilton and his companion went early to the tabernacle to insure themselves a seat, and perhaps a desirable location. When they arrived, a full hour before the service was announced to begin, a goodly number were already seated and people were

The Conversion of Hamilton Wheeler

coming from all directions. Some cars were so full that they appeared like those of the morning and evening rush hours of going down and returning from the industrial and trade centers of the city. The boys hurried down to the middle of the great shed, and began their tiresome task of holding their seats until the time set for beginning.

Long before the opening of the service every seat was occupied, and competition for standing room was apparent. Even before this the boys were tired of the hard and uncomfortable seats, and were stiffened and restless at their fixed positions and restrictions to voluntary movement. They touched elbows with each other, and with strangers on either side of them. They felt strongly a desire to move about, but to leave their seats meant losing them, so they endured the discomfort pending the diversion they anticipated during the evening with its divers interesting occurrences. The air in the building was already becoming vitiated, and the thought occurred, what will it be before the service is over? At last the music started up, and the buzz of voices from all parts of the great structure was hushed while the great audience stared in tense expectancy.

The prodigious choir filled the air with a volume of promiscuous singing. The Choir Master waved and frantically gestured with both arms and hands to bring the great chaos of voices into measured cadences. The choir with eyes riveted on their leader

The Conversion of Hamilton Wheeler

soon got into time and tune, and the inflections and rhythm of the characteristically measured hymns, and the swing and sway of the music dominated the entire congregation.

After the singing of two hymns, a call was made for all Christians to stand. While Hamilton had been brought up as a Christian by a Christian and churching mother, no thought had been given or anxiety felt as to his entering church life before he had attained his majority, or at least finished school. Since he had never joined a church, however, he did not stand with the majority of those present or when those who stood kept standing while the spotters went about identifying the non-Christians. He noticed himself observed by those about him, and felt a sense of embarrassment and mortification. He would have been glad to stand, if only to release himself from his long-maintained immobility, but he sat transfixed in his seat. He felt a sense of relief when it was over, and another hymn was announced. It happened to be "Onward Christian Soldiers," one with which he was very familiar, and he joined in singing it with considerable heartiness. It proved to be a source of relaxation and a vent for his repressed energy.

This song which Hamilton knew was succeeded by two others which were new to him, and were the Choir Master's exclusively, being typically revival in type. They were sung almost entirely by the choir, but they had a peculiar swing to them which was fascinating, and Hamilton found himself involuntarily conforming

The Conversion of Hamilton Wheeler

to their rhythm. He was carrying the tune in his head, but was not participating in the singing. His very breathing appeared to conform rhythmically with the music. At the end he had a peculiar sense of disturbed breathing, which to him was rather unique and strange. At the finish of the succeeding hymns his breathing had assumed a stammering character. There was an odd irregularity of breathing and sense of air hunger which brought forth a series of yawns. He noticed also that others about him were yawning, and he wondered if all cases were due to a common cause or to spreading by contagion.

Upon completion of the last song, at a signal from the Choir Master, the Evangelist sprang to the platform and promptly began a rapid fire of discussion of a scripture text, followed by a prayer. Many pointed remarks and invectives seemed to affect Hamilton greatly. Some of them appeared to shock him with concussive force. Others seemed to be vice-like in their repressive violence. Every word appeared as if directed at him, which produced a sense akin to stage fright and of vivid intimidation.

Another song service brought so much breathlessness that Hamilton was frightened at his very impressionability. The utterances of the Evangelist preceding it had emotionally depressed him, and the hymn seemed to increase rather than decrease his breathlessness. His heart pounded hard and rapidly against the chest walls, and a sense of oppression in

The Conversion of Hamilton Wheeler

the lungs and of an iron band about the head distressed him. The rapidity of breathing was increased, but it appeared that the most manifest change was the shortening and quickening of the expirations. It seemed that he expired three times to every inspiration.

Hamilton's companion, Douglas, had noticed the pallor, and later a leaden hue of his face, that his lips had lost their red color, as well as that his breathing was perceptibly irregular. He was frightened and uncertain of conditions that he did not understand. He leaned over and spoke to Hamilton to satisfy himself that everything was all right. Hamilton turned to answer. His lips quivered, but he did not at first find voice. Finally, on renewed effort, he whispered: "I feel so dizzy and heavy, so tight across the chest and about the head. My ears ring and flashes of light appear before my eyes." His nostrils were dilated, and his mouth and eyes were widely open. When asked if he did not want to go out in the fresh air, he answered laboriously: "No, I will be all right in a few moments."

In a short time Hamilton had reacquired a degree of equilibrium. The Evangelist had begun his discourse, to the first part of which Hamilton was completely oblivious. The emphatic and violent words, gestures, and contortions, had created a furor which stirred even Hamilton to attention. On and on proceeded the challenges, accusations, and affirmations, authori-

The Conversion of Hamilton Wheeler

tatively emphatic and repeated over and over. Rebuffs, reproofs, and rebukes, came in bombardment impulses. His speech, always rapid, seemed to get faster and faster as he proceeded, and as it became progressively faster, Hamilton became more and more mentally confused.

The eyes and ears were completely occupied with the voice and movements of the Evangelist. The attention was completely absorbed. There was no room for any fugitive thoughts. The harangue fell upon the audience as a continual succession of browbeatings in sledge-hammer blows, producing a series of emotional recoils. If one could but give vent to the emotion generated by such an exhibition of loquacity and agility by some kind of reflected or echoed activity, instead of such complete fixation demanded by restrictions of movement and by the decorum of a religious congregation, what a relief it would be. The inability to give physical vent to the response phenomenon elicited by so much and such great sensorial stimulus, in this subject of super-impressionability and lack of control, caused a sense of bursting of all bounds, restraining him from freedom of functional expression.

There seemed to be no relief at hand. The Evangelist continuing unremittingly his harangue, poured his stream of abuse, accusation, intimidation, and positive affirmation, alternately exciting the emotions of sympathy, pity, grief, and fear. Almost every act

The Conversion of Hamilton Wheeler

of one's life is emphatically condemned as sin. All the pleasures and enjoyments of life are represented as excitors of the wrath of his God. Hamilton's sense of sin weighed him down with overwhelming depression and dread of terrible consequences for each and every joy. The Evangelist's suggestion of death of the unsaved brought a shudder of despair.

With the lapse of time, Hamilton felt his feelings growing worse rather than better. The sensation of anguish extended throughout his body, the sensation of giddiness and faintness became more and more pronounced, and his general feeling more distressing. The sense of fullness and oppression of the lungs and of a band around the head was augmented. His breathing was so difficult he involuntarily sighed and inaudibly sobbed. Then came paroxysms of a sort of stumbling of breathing. Finally the distress was followed by a benumbing of the senses, all perceptions became more and more vague, the mind seemed to become clouded and progressively submerged by a sense of drunkenness. Everything at all discernible seemed to be in a whirl. In his weakness he gradually succumbed to exhaustion and relaxation. His legs moved convulsively as he collapsed into a faint.

There was now a suppressed commotion in the seats about Hamilton. Two men quickly appeared at the aisle end of the row, and requested those between them and the unconscious youth to give way. He was then quietly carried to the adjoining hospital where

The Conversion of Hamilton Wheeler

everything was anticipated and ready for resuscitation of just such cases as his. It was not long before Hamilton began to revive. He looked about strangely and inquired where he was, how he came there, and other like questions. As soon as he had recovered, his name and address were taken on a card by one of the attendants, and he was asked if he would go into the auditorium and take the Evangelist by the hand. This he declined, and he was later accompanied home by his friend Douglas, who had remained with him throughout his hour of trial.

When the Wheeler home was reached, Mrs. Wheeler answered the door, and at her first glance at Hamilton she almost shrieked: "What has happened to my boy?" Hamilton staggered into her arms. His strength had barely borne him to his home. His face and lips were still livid and his features showed only too plainly what agony he had been through. As soon as his companion explained that Hamilton had merely fainted at the revival, Mrs. Wheeler's whole thought was that he would be all right as soon as he had the recuperation of a good night's sleep.

That night Hamilton slept heavily, as one exhausted by overwork, and except for frequent convulsive movements of the arms and legs, and changes of body position, the stertorous character of his breathing would almost indicate coma. Mrs. Wheeler could not sleep, but lay wakeful in anxious thought. As daylight gradually dawned she waited with what patience

The Conversion of Hamilton Wheeler

she could muster, glancing at the clock at short intervals. At last when it struck the hour of seven she lost no time in reaching the telephone and calling up Dr. Austin. She pressed him not to wait for his breakfast but to hurry over and breakfast with her.

A half hour had not elapsed when the door bell announced Dr. Austin's arrival. Mrs. Wheeler at once invited him into the dining room, and the twain sat down at the table together. Gazing about him for a moment, the Doctor inquired: "Where is Hamilton?" Mrs. Wheeler cast her eyes down to the floor sorrowfully, paused, then answered: "Hamilton is not up yet. He attended the revival again last night and collapsed, was revived in the tabernacle hospital and brought home in a taxi. He was in a deplorable condition when he was gotten to the door by one of his friends, who went with him and who had faithfully remained with him throughout the evening."

Dr. Austin was so agitated he could hardly eat, but Mrs. Wheeler had betrayed so much emotion in her recital of what had taken place that he sought to calm himself, to suppress all emotional expression, that he might exert a quieting influence over his niece. As cautiously as possible and with great deliberation, Dr. Austin alternately partook of the breakfast before him and questioned Mrs. Wheeler regarding the boy in whose life he was so interested. Soon they had reached the end of Mrs. Wheeler's knowledge, and the subject was changed pending the finishing of the meal,

The Conversion of Hamilton Wheeler

when at the Doctor's request they retired to Hamilton's room.

As they entered the room Hamilton appeared oblivious of their presence. Dr. Austin placed a chair close to the side of the bed, and seating himself quietly took Hamilton's wrist in his hand without disturbing him. He was cautious not to annoy or irritate his nephew while in his present precarious state. He noted the rapid pulse and respiration, the heightened reflexes, and general hyperesthesia, the fact that every street noise seemed to startle and annoy him. A reaction from the exhaustion of the night before had set in, and the greatest care must be taken not to excite the senses or the emotions. As near absolute quiet as possible must be maintained.

The Conversion of Hamilton Wheeler

Chapter VIII.

MRS. WHEELER anxiously pressed Dr. Austin to tell her frankly if Hamilton's disastrous conversion indicated a previous mental deficiency which might sooner or later have developed into marked deterioration, had he never come under the influence of a revivalist. This appeared greatly to agitate the Doctor. Mrs. Wheeler noticed a frown come over his face. She feared she had trespassed into a forbidden field. She regretted asking it, and if she could, would have withdrawn her words. While she was thus pondering, he interrupted her thoughts and observed gravely:

"My dear Helen, you have asked a vital question. I hardly need assure you that Hamilton was as fine a specimen of humanity, both mentally and physically, as New York ever could boast. That fact alone makes his present despoilation distinctly more criminal. True, he was temporarily depleted by overstudy, and if I had my way he would have taken a rest and at least some recuperation at the risk of another year's preparatory work, before beginning his college course. However, in any event, did he continue to the end of the term, nothing like this would probably have occurred if only he had kept away from that man-destroying revival. The most that one can say is that his overwork, by producing a state of irritable weakness, which both of us have heretofore observed and discussed, had made him susceptible to the evangelistic process.

The Conversion of Hamilton Wheeler

"We must in the first place recognize that people of all types, races, ages, and sexes are more or less amenable to crowd psychology which caters directly to the senses and over-balances the reason. Even the lower animals, horses, cattle, and sheep, among the domesticated animals, become activated by most insignificant beginnings. Perhaps on suddenly startling and activating to panic a single one of them, the rest, influenced by the contagion of the commotion, the impetus and momentum of collective movement, will join, and a whole herd will fling itself headlong in a wild stampede which will finally end in death or in such maiming that their ultimate slaughter is the only alternative.

"We observe the stampeding of human crowds, not only in revivals, but in other religious crowds, which, when led by fanatical agitators as in incidents which occurred recently at Walla Walla, Wash., Marshall, Texas, and Haverhill, Mass., leads to riot, murder, the destruction of property, and commission of all manner of crimes and outrages which the individual members would never think of committing separately. The Crusades, the fanatical holy wars of history, and the Belgium and Northern France crimes of the Germans, are, perhaps in part, examples. Strike riots, Southern lynchings, and some political disturbances which extend beyond control, are examples. In all of the instances of mob stampedes, the crowds are by our laws held guilty equally with their leaders, but any reputable

The Conversion of Hamilton Wheeler

alienist or psychologist will bear me out in the statement that the leaders, the agitators, are almost wholly to blame, and stringent laws should be enacted correspondingly for their adequate punishment. Without such laws, present indications are that both nationally and individually we will come to grief, for the mob is blind to sequence, even to itself.

"Pardon me, Helen, I have digressed from my subject. This theme is so important and universal in its relations and applications, it is difficult to keep within its narrower limitations. I trust, however, you will come to a realization of the almost universalness of the fundamental principles involved in revivals.

"Hamilton has simply been excited, emotionalized, terrorized, and stampeded into a condition of mental decrepitude and a helpless capitulation which they term conversion. They have overwhelmed him with mental confusion, clouding of consciousness, disorientation, and such disorders and falsifications of perception as hallucinations and illusions, and thus rendered him prone to delusion. The full significance of this I can make comprehensible to you only by going into considerable detail, and elucidating it to you step by step. Of fundamental importance is a true concept of the dynamic elements of our physical and mental functions, and their inter-relationships as exhibited in outward expressions.

"Erroneous concepts of the product of the mental function," explained Dr. Austin, "are responsible for

The Conversion of Hamilton Wheeler

much false superstructure built upon them as bases. I cannot emphasize too strongly the obvious fact that thought is not an entity or any kind of a pre-existing divine or spiritual essence, which is in the possession of a person or soul and which is projected into the outer world as a voluntary or freewill act of an individual, as is vaguely intimated in modern religious teachings, but is a *reaction* product, while the will is the dynamic factor or element exhibited in its expression.

"We often speak of an impulsive person as being wilful, whereas we mean he is contrary, and acts out of conformity with mature reason. The more impulsive such persons are, the more directly and exclusively is the thought and act a reaction, and thus unelaborated by the interreaction of the sum of past experience with current perceptions which they elaborate to a degree corresponding to the maturity of any deliberation. The greater the degree of this maturity of deliberative elaboration that is attained, the greater is the exhibition of what we call *will* or volition, which is the term we give to the collective discernments, discriminations and decisions, which govern our really premeditated acts. The sum of these constitute the will, and the greater the elaboration, the more independent and intentional is the will.

"Acts of will or volition are typically those of consciousness only. Automatic performances are not vo-

The Conversion of Hamilton Wheeler

litional. Impulsive acts may be volitional or not correspondingly as they are conscious or automatic. If they attract the attention, we say they are intentional, but should say *attentional*.

"The will cannot exist without some degree of conscious thought, notwithstanding that thought can exist without that expression of physical motive force which would give it a value of volition. Of the two factors the will is the dynamic element, yet we have expressions of this dynamic element apart from, or other than as a product of conscious thought, which are not those of the will. Physical motive force, completely segregated from conscious thought is not the will, and conversely, thought, minus this outward expression of physical motive force, does not exhibit volition.

"The physical motive force of an act must not be confounded with the will. Impulsive acts are generally more forceful and violent than the deliberated ones, but they are less sustained. The rash and criminal act, the violent reaction to fear, or to fright that does not paralyze, may be superforceful, yet involve very little of what we denominate the will. Conversely, the elaborated product of adequate deliberation is seldom, if ever, violent. The exhibited strength of the insane is sometimes so violent that a half dozen normal men may be necessary to restrain them, yet no expression of discrimination is exhibited. We have exhibited force uncontrolled, unmodified.

The Conversion of Hamilton Wheeler

"The physical motive force of our acts, that many of these false teachings construe as the will, is the same vital product, the same dynamic force, which is manifested in wholly automatic acts, in the insane, and in the partially deliberated acts of impulsive individuals. We have in the observation of evangelistic effects upon the individual revival auditors, one of a violent sensory stimulus, the normal physical reaction of which is impossible at the time of their reception, and therefore an accumulation of unvented physical motive force generated by the stimulus incited, the stress of which mounts progressively higher and higher until in the weak, the hyperesthetic, and emotional, restraint becomes impossible and it is vicariously given impulsive and explosive-like expression in the so-called conversion that ultimately releases the pent up energy.

"Conversion itself is a most peculiar thing. When a person becomes insane with the accompaniment of fixed delusions, the subject of the delusion is generally the subject upon which the individual has been previously obsessed while on the road to a state of complete unbalance. For some time a person exhibits eccentricities, and as we say is 'daffy' on religion, on love, or anything which has been violently imposed upon him, or has been the subject of prolonged morbid meditation, which is in line with the type of insanity. For example, in one in great exaltation, or as the French term it, *Grandeur*, the delusion often takes the form of an imagination that the subject is a King,

The Conversion of Hamilton Wheeler

Emperor, or Grandee; and if based on a religious obsession, that he is Buddha, Jesus, Mahomet, an Apostle, Saint, Satan, etc., according to his religion.

“When the conditions are right for it, a simple suggestion may determine the character of the delusion, just as in the hypnotic state. In the phenomena of conversion it is surprising to what extent that spoken and latent suggestion determine the fixed ideas which direct or control the status, objective, and direction, of the over-generated physical motive force which is then seeking outward expression. It may in one case become an obsession or a complete delusion. Personally, I cannot regard the prolonged fixation of ideas which come as suggestion in convulsive or impulsive conversions as anything other than a degree of *delusion*, whether the victim becomes completely unbalanced or not. The best one can do is to pronounce them harmless delusions, and I am personally convinced that they are injurious to the extent of their profundity, and conversely, they are harmless only to the degree of their superficiality.*

“Whenever I meet a person who avers positively a fixed conviction that Jesus is his savior, asserts the reality of a *living* Christ or God, or that Jesus is a genuine historical character, or that the Vedas, the Dhamnapada, the Egyptian Book of the Dead, the Bible, the Koran, or other textbook of any religion are authentic and genuine works of their gods or christs, that their gods or saviors, saints, spirits, or devils, are

*See Appendix B.

The Conversion of Hamilton Wheeler

by them sensed as near them, 'the divine immanence,' in which cases they base their conclusions *solely* upon what they term *experience*, and a fixed conviction which is not based upon the consideration of credible facts, I have no hesitancy in pronouncing such a pseudo-perception as a full-fledged delusion, just as I would if the same thing was the effect of secular or non-religious causes.

"It is interesting that the period of great predominance of conversion is the age of puberty. At this critical age the boy or girl experiences the dawn of the sexual impulse. At first it comes as an uninterpreted desire, an ardor, a fervor, with little direction or objective. When this is by direct and latent suggestion caused to be falsely interpreted through religious teaching and induced conviction or a well defined conversion, the child enters adolescence in a state of definite delusion.

"Children are particularly susceptible and liable to hallucinations, both induced and accidental. The reason of this is undoubtedly to be found in the predisposition of the low density tissues of childhood, which are so highly receptive, and are prone naturally to react with precocity, excessive velocity of transmission of impulses, and immaturity of deliberation.

"This tissue of low density, with its typical paroxysmal or spasmodic nature of reaction, when subjected to sensorial bombardment and impact violence, becomes hyperesthetic, its reaction becoming tetanic and cramp-

The Conversion of Hamilton Wheeler

like, then passing into a state of rigor which is perpetuated, and the physical basis of the hallucinations and delusions are then superinduced. In view of this, the most critical period of childhood is seized upon by evangelists. Statistics appear to show that fifty percent or more of conversions during the entire span of life, occur during adolescence and beginning at this critical age of sexual puberty; though they also occur even at the tender age of eight years.*

"In perhaps the majority of cases, this critical period of life is taken advantage of to stampede the tender young folk by the violence of the emotional excitement of a convulsive conversion. Especial pains are taken to march great numbers of school children to revivals, devoting special meetings to them, that they may be the better influenced by contagion from one to the other.

"The child at puberty is the most hyperesthetic of all adolescence, and as such is super-sensitive, super-irritable, super-impressionable and super-suggestible. It is an age when above all others of life he should be shielded and guarded from all possible excitations of the emotions and impure influences. If he safely survives this critical period the balance of adolescence is relatively easy for him in a moral way, though with the progressive development of self restraint and control, he also becomes retrogressively less amenable to religious conversion.

"When a child at puberty is excited to a profound

*See Appendix A.

The Conversion of Hamilton Wheeler

emotional conversion, not only is the sexual instinct, by suggestion, caused to be delusively interpreted as a supernatural sense of 'immanence,' and as a conviction or transfixion of a non-deliberated decision, but it is also coincidentally stimulated—sexually. We then have a most closely related association between religion and lust, to be followed through life by recurrence of sexual excitement coincident with the religious. Probably in this way a part of our observed correlation between religion and lust is first established.

"In books, which you will find in any average public library, on primitive peoples and of the childhood of humanity, you will observe numerous instances of religio-sexual initiation of both sexes at puberty. I will not at this time undertake to go into their erotic natures and practices, but prefer that you read them yourself. I might, however, suggest that you read: 'Adolescence and Religion' by Theodore Schroeder, in the *Journal of Religious Psychology* (Vol. 6, pp. 124-148); or 'The Adolescent Girl Among Primitive Peoples' by Miriam Van Waters, in the same *Journal* (Vol. 6, pp. 375-421 and Vol. 7, pp. 75-120). These you can probably obtain at the Public Library here. If then you look into the licentious practices and conduct of the peoples that so initiate their young at puberty, you will understand perhaps the lesser degree of licentiousness which is animated by puberty conversions of our own civilized people, and appreciate as you never did before the intimate relation of emotional religion and lust.

The Conversion of Hamilton Wheeler

"I have told you all this to soften your outraged feelings that have been aroused when Hamilton exhibited a sexual conversion with the emotional excitement of his religious conversion. Hamilton is now eighteen, and I feel strongly that when we restore him to normal equilibrium and stability, his former character will be re-established and his hereditary temperament will be reasserted.

"Hamilton was somewhat more susceptible than the average man, owing primarily to his age. The critical period of adolescence is a prime factor with both the sexes. Some of the most eminent medical men of Europe have recognized this fact, and issued warnings to keep children away from revivals and similar places where their emotions would be highly wrought, but I note that these warnings are not only disregarded, but to the contrary, special pains are taken to accomplish the violent emotional conversion of children and adolescents generally, just as our educators compel haste in study, notwithstanding that the psychologist-philosopher John Locke condemned it ages ago. It appears to be the ambition of the evangelicals to have people acquire their convictions and prejudices at an age when they are least competent to judge wisely, and I observe, in direct opposition to medical authority, that a professor in one of our city divinity schools advises the churches to hasten the harvest of the young.

"Dr. Clement Dukes, in his article, 'The Hygiene of

The Conversion of Hamilton Wheeler

Youth,' Allbutt's System of Medicine, Vol. I, p. 463, which I have here, wrote: 'It is most mischievous to tamper with the *emotions* of the young, for they are so unstable during this period of life as to be certain to run into channels unforeseen and undesired. Even religious fervour, if excessive, is often perverted into the shape of sexual immorality. In youth the appetites, desires and passions awake, untempered by reason, uninstructed by experience, so that at no time of life is steadfast guidance and help more essential. Yet how few boys—and still fewer girls—receive the needful aid from their home training; a *policy of silence* is substituted with results frequently disastrous.' Yet with sinister motives, in behalf of recruiting, this theological professor, the Rev. George A. Coe, in his 'Spiritual Life,' p. 54, which I also have in my hand, wrote: 'The mental condition during adolescence is particularly favorable to deep religious impressions. This is the time that the child becomes competent to make a deeply personal life choice; such a choice is now easier than either before or after; this, accordingly, is the time at which a wise church will expect to reap its chief harvest of members.' Here Mr. Coe voices the keynote of evangelical policy to harvest its victims during the critical period of adolescence. Another religious psychologist, Edward S. Ames, expresses a spirit kindred to that of Coe: 'The demand of the church, under an increasing realization of tension between it and many developments of modern

The Conversion of Hamilton Wheeler

society, has been for a more efficient method of winning its own children and securing recruits from the world.' This is not quite so blunt as Coe's admonition, but it is not difficult of interpretation.

"Thus you observe that the propaganda of harvesting the young is a deep laid policy of the evangelical church in general, but after all it is the evangelist who is the executioner. He is the real commissioner of the crime. He is the one who deliberately, and for a commercial consideration far beyond what he could obtain in any other field, stoops to crowd hypnotism in order to attain his base designs. He is the real culprit whom future officers of the law will hold guilty, and who future historians will chronicle as the arch ecclesiastical criminal of our generation. The reader of the future will marvel at our tolerance of such impositions in an age otherwise so highly developed."

Mrs. Wheeler exclaimed: "Why Uncle! I am shocked at your ideas of revivals and revivalists. I can't believe what you say so depreciative of the noted Evangelist and his great mission of saving souls. Certainly he is the recognized head of the Protestant Christian Church of America. He has ample backing both in and out of clerical circles, of which no other can boast. No other minister preaches to such large congregations or receives such great rewards. He appropriates to himself the role of critic of the ministry in general, and apparently with their full knowledge and consent. He is not only the apparent

The Conversion of Hamilton Wheeler

arbiter of Christian theology and ministerial methods, but the whipmaster of the whole theological profession."

"I grant you all that," responded Dr. Austin, "but so much the worse for Christianity in general. What you say of this one, can be said of all evangelists. They all assume the tyranny with the prerogative of a monarch, and command submission and passive obedience of the clergy who band together to obtain a revivalist to accomplish for the wasted ranks what they have failed to achieve themselves. In doing this, they have to surrender everything to the ignorant blackguard and bully Evangelist, who in turn assumes the role of the superior or dictator to cultured clergymen. How can any one longer respect religion in the face of that?"

"Enough of that now. It is my wish to confine myself to the scientific aspects of the morbid effects produced by these hyenas, so we will return to the pathological considerations. When they are fully set forth, the guilt of the despoilers of humanity will be made clear.

"Any factor of religion, whether *productive of* religion or as a *product of religion*, is morbid in its action upon man when it disturbs his normal equilibrium, his mental balance or stability. In fact, all religious causes of unbalance and instability are distinctly morbid and vicious in their effects upon humanity, and we can hardly escape the conclusion that what we have been taught to identify as supernatural phenomena,

The Conversion of Hamilton Wheeler

cannot be too soon recognized and treated as sub-normal.

"The normal man is well balanced, well within the extremes of both optimism and pessimism, of exaltation and depression, of temerity and timidity, of overbrightness and dullness, of hyperesthesia and anesthesia, of credulity and skepticism, of emotionalism and stolidity. The normal state is characterized by poise and power of self-control, while the abnormal one is marked by loss of such power, and often chaotic fluctuation from one extreme to another.

"If Hamilton fails to respond to my treatment, and drifts on into well defined insanity, we may expect the present instability to so increase that his mental state will fluctuate between mania and dementia, characterizing manic-depressive insanity.

"As a result of long hours of fatiguing mental labor extending over several months, and unaccompanied by physical exercise, Hamilton acquired a softness of muscle and general loss of tissue density which, as you know, has been exhibited in irritable weakness, or what people usually call *nervousness*. One of the typical characters of general tissue softness is over-sensitiveness and violence of all reaction. This is exhibited in reactions to impressions received through all of the five senses, thus involving super-susceptibility to mental or sensorial shock; and in fact all reactions are here characterized by a corresponding increase of suddenness, violence, and a paroxysmal type of reaction to all sense impressions.

The Conversion of Hamilton Wheeler

"A person so affected is restless, uneasy, and prone to assume tensional and fixed postures, and to make frequent conscious readjustments of position. They appear unable to relax, however much they crave and need it. They are always tired from this constant and abnormal expenditure of energy. As may be expected, the reflex and all other reactions are paroxysmal or spasm-like in nature, but perhaps that does not convey in entirety the whole fact. Not only are the muscular reactions abrupt, jerky, and explosive in nature, but they are equally prone to tetany or paralytic fixation, or, as we say, to *motor inhibition*. However, in such cases, every sensory impression, one of the more abrupt and forceful ones in particular, is disposed to produce a sense of recoil contraction or actual muscular rigidity, (catalepsy)."

In his anxiety to clarify the subject to Mrs. Wheeler, Dr. Austin began at the bottom in its elucidation. He observed: "Perhaps the most fundamental factor underlying emotion and emotionalism is the density of tissue of an individual. General tissue density is normally lowest at the earliest ages and highest in old age, lowest in women, highest in men, lowest in the sedentary, highest in the physically active, lowest in alcoholism and chronic invalidism, and highest in health. Hereditary weakness is very commonly due to deficient tissue density. When luxury gets into the blood, it is indicated by soft tissues. Soft tissues predispose to, and in fact entail, emotionalism; hardening

The Conversion of Hamilton Wheeler

is the best and only real cure. Thus the *work cure* has supplanted the *rest cure* for neurotics."

Dr. Austin now proceeded to point out that the higher the density of the tissues the greater is their capacity to withstand sensorial perturbation without motor reaction and without painful tension, and conversely that the lower the density (the softer the tissues) the sooner will come painful and motor outburst. "We speak," said he, "of capacity to withstand as a matter of strength, but we must not forget that the denser tissues are also the stronger in every way, though less violent, as they are slower in physical expression.

"Emotionalism is said to be a state of redundancy of motility, which suggests that it is an exhibition of an excess of motive force, whereas it is in reality one of lack or absence of capacity and control of motor reactions. The margin of safety is minus, and no elasticity remains for shock absorption. Thus an emotional person is more easily and quickly excited to his capacity limit of voluntary control and over the abyss into uncontrolled, involuntary, and even incoordinated movement. Bear in mind that convulsions, the clonic contractions, as we call them, are but a process of breaking of the integrity of a tonic or a continued rigid contraction, and the convulsion is always preceded by a tension or a rigid state of tonic contraction, and is followed by exhaustion.

"There is nothing more absurd in present-day psychology than the definitions of emotion. One says

The Conversion of Hamilton Wheeler

it is 'a trinity in unity,' whatever that is. Another states that it is 'an ultimate and primary aspect of mind,' an alpha and omega, as it were, and thus, 'emotion is emotion.' Too much is said of the emotions as entities, rather than as mental characters, aspects of mind, or dynamic physical expressions. Impulsiveness and deficiently deliberated thought are products of the emotional mind. Panicky undeliberated acts are the same. Such features characterize individuals who are the arch dupes of evangelists.

"An emotional person is an explosive thing, one that explodes in the absence of resistance, or of endurance of the exciting cause. There is a parallel and direct relation between emotivity and sensibility, so that we quite invariably find a super-sensibility and emotionalism combined in the same person. What causes one must cause the other. The high tension of the emotional state is followed both by reaction violence and irritability.

"Thought and emotionalism are always antithetical to one another. Each declines with the ascendancy of the other, thus we master the mind by disciplining the organic functions involved in the emotions. Conversely, we find the powers of thought in abeyance to uncontrolled emotions.

Weak digestive organs and emotionalism go hand in hand. Nothing inhibits digestion so powerfully and quickly as acute or deep emotions, especially of the depressive type. A dyspeptic is always hit in the stom-

The Conversion of Hamilton Wheeler

ach when convulsed by emotion. Very painful emotions even produce acute and serious dilation of the stomach. Pronounced diarrheas, biliousness, and jaundice are occasionally produced from powerful emotions. Thus the saying of the wit: 'They think they are pious when they are only bilious,' has a basis in fact.

"When one comprehends what I have just mentioned, it is but one more step to understand that intelligence is really a product of nutrition and all the processes of assimilation and appropriation, and that which inhibits vital processes correspondingly inhibits intelligence. Even if that factor of inhibition is emotion the effect is the same as the most physical in nature. The more sudden and intensive the emotion, the greater the motor effect. The immediate effect is muscular contraction, with the dilation of exhaustion secondary to it, yet which may be of fatal sequence.

"Another cause for the destroyed reason of emotional individuals, is the series of breaks in the continuity of thought occasioned by frequent minor emotional reactions to the thousand and one insignificant vicissitudes of life to which a normal person does not react, but which so breaks up consecutive thought that the victim becomes characterized by undue distractibility of attention, by desultoriness of thought, and eventually by incoherent speech. The same supersensitiveness and emotional status which are responsible for the vivid emotional forms, such as fear, grief, anger, joy, enthusiasm, etc., are determining factors

The Conversion of Hamilton Wheeler

of delusion causation. When these latter effects are produced, the alienist must pronounce the case a lunatic."

Mrs. Wheeler listened attentively, even spellbound, at what she regarded as a marvelous grasp of the situation. She remarked that she had no idea so much was known to humanity. She could not help but think, how but a short time ago, a friend who had recently become fascinated with Christian Science, had told her that all of the things described by Dr. Austin were unreal, were not in the least degree material, and that they were only products of the imagination (error). Then she wondered if Dr. Austin had given her a complete outline of the subject, at least one that would enable her to sustain herself in discussion with her Christian Science friend. She recalled that her friend had already told her that doctors knew nothing of such derangements, and never would compass such knowledge because they approached it from the physical side, when it was really a metaphysical subject.

Suddenly addressing herself to the Doctor seriously, she observed: "Tell me, Uncle, the *modus operandi* of the workings of these revivals, how they so wonderfully operate on people as they did on Hamilton. The achievements are so wonderful I would be compelled to think that they are Providential visitations, except for the fact that I cannot believe that any *divine* experience would or could produce the disastrous mental and physical affections such as have proved so blighting

The Conversion of Hamilton Wheeler

to Hamilton. I know if it were God it would be perfect and wholly good."

"You are right," responded Dr. Austin, "but that is not all. When you have heard the whole story, I think you will agree with me that, determined upon any dual basis of theology or morality, the good being of God and the evil that of Satan, these revivals are of the latter, and these evangelists are doing more harm than all the saloons of the country put together. In fact, they make business for the saloon and the brothel, as well as directly provide thousands of inmates for our penal and insane institutions. They must know it as they provide for it. I regard an evangelist as the theological prototype of the medical charlatan, and I believe he is an even greater menace to the community.

"Let us go on with the succession of events of the victim of conversion. To begin with, we must not overlook the influence of the evangelist. Emotionalism is contagious, and the great emotionalism of manner and speech of a revivalist exhibits a strong emotional influence on his audience. If the evangelist is an adept at his calling, he designingly accentuates his visible emotionalism in every possible way. This making of him into an excessively emotional actor, also in turn reacts upon himself, duly increasing his own innate emotionalism. Witness the effect upon him: we observe one as though intoxicated or under the influence of absinthe or hashish. He too is suffering

The Conversion of Hamilton Wheeler

what his victims are suffering. He too is showing derangement, general enfeeblement, unbalance, eroticism, exhaustion, and decay.

"Favorable conditions for conversion among the auditors, whether standing or sitting, are crowded conditions sufficient to produce vitiated air to breathe, and restriction of voluntary movement. Hard and uncomfortable board bench seats appear to favor fixity of position. One of the most important requirements for conversion, as it is for other forms of hypnotism, is mental fixation and the production and control of dominant ideas. The initial requirement of this is the undivided attention of the congregation. This is a fundamental requisite.

"Perhaps you have noticed when your mind was active on some particular line of thought, that music of great volume, activity, loudness, and especially with some rhythmic swing to it, dispels your previous thoughts. If the first piece did not succeed the second one did. That is the motive for the great choirs of all successful modern revivals. This is so well recognized that all modern revival songs that have the right rhythm, swing, and emotional quality, are now copyrighted and are good earners. This is a relatively new feature of religious songs. All is commercialized nowadays.

"Having cleared the mind of all previous thoughts, it is the business of the evangelist to attract and hold the exclusive attention of the audience. To attain this,

The Conversion of Hamilton Wheeler

the old time preacher, whose audience slept while he preached, does not suffice. He must hold the attention whatever the cost. To do this, his auditors are entertained with acrobatic stunts, flamboyancy, profanity, vulgarity, and mad ravings. Thus he fixes the eye and abates the breath of everyone within sight and hearing. Those beyond get the effect through the contagious extension of the psychology of the crowd. The goal is to do and say everything possible which is well calculated to produce motor reaction or muscular responsive activity, before an audience which must not and cannot respond or react in a motor way, within the bounds of religious decorum. The auditors must remain passive—negative—whatever the tension or stress, so long as their endurance permits. Then emotional, hysterical, or maniacal outburst must give vent to the distressing repression.

“Coincident to this painful stress there is what might be termed a silent struggle between the impelling emotion and hypnotic influence to surrender and subordination, on the one hand, and the natural forces of self-preservation, of the first of nature’s laws, on the other. The intense struggle that so many revival converts experience just prior to the self-surrender to the persuasive forces about them, are not unlike that experienced by subjects of stage hypnotism, in which stage fright is the counterpart of the sense of embarrassment and intimidation, which is designingly induced at revivals by the various schemes of singling

The Conversion of Hamilton Wheeler

out the converted from the non-converted, etc. It is represented to us by various religious writers that the struggle experienced by converts, admittedly a painful one, is a struggle for mastery between right and wrong. This, however, is mere twaddle."

The Conversion of Hamilton Wheeler

Chapter IX.

MRS. WHEELER had proved an interested listener. She was being introduced into a side of religion and religious experience that was entirely new to her. At times she exhibited evidence of being shocked by the almost brutal bluntness with which the truth had been broken to her. She, however, knew her Uncle was absolutely reliable, a man who had ever been ready to admit it when a problem was not yet solved, and had always been one of those rugged apostles of sound common sense who are never pretentious or untruthful. If he could not be trusted for facts and the truth, no one could. Moreover, he had never before unfolded himself as he now had to her.

However, convinced of the truth of all that Dr. Austin had told her, Mrs. Wheeler was not altogether satisfied. She was not yet fully informed of the mode of action, or what might be termed the mechanics of conversion. She hesitated to phrase her thought, then observed: "Has man ever determined the manner of operation of revival processes on the human subject in a wholly material way?" Then she paused, as though she would withdraw the question. She was sensitive, and she did not desire to impose upon her Uncle's generosity in so freely imparting to her what it must needs have taken so much time and study for him to acquire. Dr. Austin surmised this, and generously assured her that nothing would give

The Conversion of Hamilton Wheeler

him greater pleasure than to instruct and serve her in any way within his power.

The tears came to Mrs. Wheeler's eyes at this unanticipated expression of kindly consideration. How much it meant to him to tell her so much that so deeply concerned religious thought, she did not know. In his younger days Dr. Austin had been something of a Churchman. Later, as he became engrossed and occupied by his profession, he ceased attendance at church services, but she had never heard him commit himself on the subject. If he had become alienated, he kept it to himself, as becomes professional and business men to do who seek patronage from all men, regardless of nation, race, color, or religion.

Again taking up the thread of his discourse, Dr. Austin continued: "First, let us understand that revivalism is mass hypnotism, and the evangelist is a despotic hypnotiser of multitudes. His audience is a crowd, subject to the sways and contagion of crowds generally, and his appeal is to that which ranks as the lowest of forms of human association. It is both atavistic and sterile. It is destructive, and never constructive, in its works. The crowd, or the collective consciousness of it, possesses all the lower attributes, the emotions and primitive instincts, but none of the intellectual and higher attributes of the independent individual. Yet the individual member loses his identity, and is swallowed up by the crowd.

"Just make it known if you get tired of this," said Dr. Austin benevolently.

The Conversion of Hamilton Wheeler

"Go on, Uncle, don't be afraid," responded Mrs. Wheeler.

Then he continued: "For a number of years centering about 1890, modern hypnotism underwent advancement in great strides, especially in Europe, and it appeared that a most potent agent for the cure of many functional diseases and vicious habits was at the disposition of the medical profession, but its dangers caused the American profession largely to leave it alone, and it remained for the rise of religious psychology to analyze and utilize its evangelical possibilities. Many volumes have been written on the subject, most of which deprecate revivals in general as more harmful than beneficial to the public, yet others have venally urged such means of harvesting, even of children in adolescence. We observe at this time, during the stress of a great war, when the time is deemed ripe for wholesale conversion, that the bars are let down and evangelists are fairly killing themselves and maiming our populace in thousands, to make hay while the sun shines. Financial reports demonstrate its commercial success, and hospital and asylum reports further confirm it by the harm done.

"Hypnotic influence upon a subject may be either a reinforcement of his will, such as is wrought by medical men for remedial benefit, accomplishing what the unaided will cannot, or it may be a breaking down of the will (surrender), such as we observe in all cases of submission where the subject becomes subordinated

The Conversion of Hamilton Wheeler

and subservient to the hypnotist, as in the case of evangelical conversion.

"Dr. Liebault, the founder of the Nancy School of French hypnotism, was scrupulously cautious never to break down the will of the subject under hypnotic treatment, and thus he avoided not only a possible mental confusion and struggle of resistance incident upon submitting to the suggestions, but also the later detrimental effects which are characteristic to sudden and violent religious conversions.

"Now Helen, I wish to prepare you for the knowledge, which, if I am to elucidate this subject to you properly, you must have, regardless of your other religious views, which I have no disposition to disturb. Revival conversion is an introduction into— *not* the *supernatural*, but the *sub-normal*. That fact the world should know, not in reckless depreciation of any sane religion, but to save the world from such religion as this, if it be religion at all. Let us first do this duty to the world that it may be saved before it crosses the bridge which is being built in its path in the name of religion."

Mrs. Wheeler looked aghast at the words of her Uncle. She had never heard him speak in such a manner before. He was quick to catch her expression of horror at his words, uttered in such grave seriousness, such stern earnestness. Then he smiled reassuringly, and observed: "Calm yourself, Helen. I do not propose to cry this from the housetops as it should be done

The Conversion of Hamilton Wheeler

to save others now as it would have saved Hamilton, had it been done in advance of his sad experience."

Mrs. Wheeler at once saw the force of his argument, and remarked: "Would to Heaven, Uncle, that I knew then what I do now, but I want to know more of it. It is giving me light I had never dreamed of before. Already I can see dawning a new mental horizon of boundless breadth and depth. I was shocked because from early childhood these very religious emotions and ecstasies have been pictured to me as those of the profoundest religious sense and experience, the very acme of proof of all things religious. It was a rude awakening to have its human, material status so abruptly uncovered. Yet I want the truth."

"What I have previously told you about the precocious and excessive reaction of all low-density tissues of the body," continued the Doctor, "applies with equal force to the tissues of the organs of special sense, such as the eye, ear, nose, tongue, and surface tissues of the body, which are involved in the primary reception of sensorial impressions. These tissues, which are what we term the nobler tissues, over-react functionally, correspondingly as their tissues lose in density. They are more highly epithetliated and phosphorated tissues than the muscular. They perform functions of living tissues which are more highly specialized and delicate, but they are far less contractile than the others, and less subject to fatigue, and practically not at all to tetany. It is due to this fact that violent sense

The Conversion of Hamilton Wheeler

impressions, which tetanize other and more contractile tissues, which are affected secondarily through reflex and less direct communications, continue to be transmitted through these organs as subsequent sensorial impressions, when the normally associated functioning of the mutually interreacting communicating tissues is in abeyance.

"In hypnotism we have an illustration of how these reactions occur in all analogous phenomena. Through the medium of the eyes or ears, or both together, a state is produced which reduces the subject to the mental level of subconsciousness. The faculty of perception of sense impressions continues, but those perceptions are not reacted upon (elaborated) by the associated sum of past experiences of the individual. The tissues involved in past sensory reactions fail of that repetition of reaction which occurs in the waking state, and thus a low grade of partial consciousness, which we term subconsciousness, takes place, with consequent absence of the bearing upon new sense impressions, and of the full concert of representations of past experience of the individual, which would constitute full consciousness. If a suggestion is made that a certain thing is a fact, or the subject is told to do something, no mental process deliberating the truth or fallacy of the statement, or any debating considerations of wisdom of the suggested act, of the sequence of it, etc., are entertained. The statement and the command are accepted without question, and acted upon without the least pro-

The Conversion of Hamilton Wheeler

cess of weighing them in the light of the individual's past experience.

"We find that the peculiar mental status of hyperesthetic neurotics, highly disciplined soldiers, subjects of stage hypnotism, whose wills have been broken down for the edification of amusement audiences, victims of sudden and violent conversions, and persons in general who are innately feeble-minded or who have been browbeaten into submission and subordinated to other minds, who are characterized as followers of leaders and of crowds and never do their own thinking, are correspondingly credulous, analogous to the hypnotised subject.

"The individual unit of crowds, who is in large degree compelled to subordinate individuality to the composite collective consciousness of the whole, becomes a part of the whole in his reaction, and at the expense of individuality. The hyperesthetic, by virtue of his super-impressionability, is correspondingly super-suggestible and thus super-credulous. Emotional tetanus effaces the associations of past experience representation.

"A somewhat advanced stage of hypnotism embraces a state of muscular rigidity, which in turn involves an absence or abeyance of volition. An arm or leg may be placed in any fixed position, and it will continue as placed against considerable effort exerted upon it by another person. An entire body may be thus made so rigid that it will support an extraordinary weight in

The Conversion of Hamilton Wheeler

the capacity of a bridge from head to heel. The spinal muscles become so strongly contracted that the body arches backwards (oposthotinus). These rigid states are known as catalepsy, and all these allied phases are cataleptic in type.

"The tetanies of the tissues involved in the subconscious states, that I have just referred to, are certainly very closely allied to those of catalepsy. We have observed that hypnotism and these other states are otherwise practically the same, perhaps varying mostly in degree as to factors of causation, and as to physical and mental manifestation. The subconscious ego is the credulous and plastic one, as is the subwaking hypnotic subject. The irresistible impulse in both is untempered or controlled by reason. Blindness to sequence is the natural concomitant, and criminality and unethical conduct is a natural sequel. It is mental disassociation in all its forms. Double consciousness and personalities, and the functional disease amnesia are among the typical manifestations.

"As we experience a separation of the usual representation of past experiences from current sense impressions, which latter are thus deprived of their normal association, we exhibit a subconscious character on one occasion and a fully conscious one on another. If the different conscious levels are quite diverse and the subjects remain in one or another for hours or days at a time, two different personalities are recognized, such as are illustrated in Stevenson's story of 'Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde.'

The Conversion of Hamilton Wheeler

"An unfortunate status of our mentality is that no amount of reason and understanding during the full conscious periods can markedly influence the subconscious ones which may precede or follow them. The latter remain practically undisturbed. A convert may obtain ever so many satisfactory proofs that the Bible is simply a collection of a few books selected from hundreds that had previously passed current with equal authority and veneration, until the fourth century, and originally made by a group of unscrupulous prelates of the Roman Church, yet in spite of himself, if he was brought up to believe it the infallible word of God, he experiences an irrepressible awe, and often an emotional veneration in handling it, that is remarkable.

"The Arabs and Hindus experience such an emotion of inhibitory awe and reverence in contemplating the deity that they can with difficulty pronounce the holy name. Complete inhibition is not infrequent. The overwhelming sense of veneration is so indelibly impressed on the inaccessible subconsciousness that no amount of information or reason of the full conscious ego can dispel it. It exhibits itself only when under emotional sway, never in operations of the reason, and only shows itself at the surface in the hypnotic state, insanity, in crowd psychology, and other states wherein the reason is suppressed, and consciousness is thus correspondingly incomplete.

"The narrowing of the mental function, so much observed as a result of factors of sensorial shock

The Conversion of Hamilton Wheeler

and tetany, is undoubtedly due to tetanic paralysis of some constituent tissues involved in the collective mental function. Tissues once tetanized are predisposed to subsequent tetanies. Thus an individual once terrorized is prone to future terrors, once shocked is more prone to subsequent shocks, and once rendered erotic by religious excitement, the subject is prone to future sexual excitations and to licentiousness. All emotional excitements, and their subsequent and consequential physical exhaustions, produce a predilection to alcoholic indulgence. Especially in Kentucky has it been notable.

"Whether one interprets the major tetany as taking place in the inner end plate tissues of the sensory nerves or sensorium, the higher centers, or the muscles of motor nerve distribution, the effect is the same, a tetanic paralysis. A sense of fixation or tensional rigidity pervades more or less of the whole muscular organism. The instigation to activity is adduced in astounding and repeated blows, yet destitute of any motor outlet. It is this tetany, this rigidity and exhibited cataleptic paralysis of the superficial muscular system, that constitutes the so-called motor inhibition which is such an essential requirement of hypnotic trance production, as well as hypnotic conversion.

"Right here we come to the consideration of what and where the higher mental tissues are. That they lie beyond the sensorium, all will concur, but are they *exclusively* in the brain? That is a question. Person-

The Conversion of Hamilton Wheeler

ally, I believe not. That the higher mental areas are concerned with memory must be the case, for we weigh all current perceptions with the accrued material of our past experience—our collective experience. The more completely the individual's collective experience is brought to bear for any case of discernment, discrimination, etc., the riper is the judgment which is developed.

"All memories being lesser potential repetitions of original reactions incident to past sense impressions, and the motor organs involved in the motor reactions, we have good reason to believe that these same body constituents collectively constitute the areas of the repetitions involved in what we call memory. That being the case, the collective tissues of the entire body must be reckoned as the composite organ of mind.

"A memory of a past occurrence which involved a painful tissue reaction of the tip of a finger, for example, would also involve a repetition or a secondary reaction of the same tissues, as well as its original contemporary sense impressions, and the associated past experiences of the original reaction covering its composite mental picture."

"I think I understand," interjected Mrs. Wheeler. "Now let me see if I can state it correctly: The full or higher consciousness requires a full representation of associated ideas or memories of past events to bear upon and elaborate any current event which is made known to us through one or more sense impressions,

The Conversion of Hamilton Wheeler

in order to make possible a full composite concept of the current event. And to the extent that the bearing of the past experiences are lacking, the full comprehension and deliberated action upon it, will be correspondingly lacking."

"Very good," commented Dr. Austin. "Now tell me the physical activities underlying it all."

"Attention then," said Mrs. Wheeler. "Your theory is that the whole body is subject to reaction to impressions through the special senses, and to complete a full complement of representations of past experiences the reactions of all tissues involved in all original reactions associating with the current ones, must be brought to bear upon in elaboration of the current one."

"Bravo, Bravo," shouted Dr. Austin. "Now the pathology?"

Mrs. Wheeler continued: "You believe that when the muscles and tissues generally are even temporarily paralyzed, as by a tetany, a spasm, or an emotion, shall I say?"

"Go on," said Dr. Austin.

"The possible representation of the tissues involved in the field of association fails to respond or come into the composite current consciousness, which is thus left incomplete, and subconscious to that degree."

"Better than I could have stated it myself," commented the Doctor. "However, there is just one thing, I think, that you have omitted. Can you now make

The Conversion of Hamilton Wheeler

a practical application of it? Can you think of a typical clinical case?"

"I should think a crowd might be one," suggested Mrs. Wheeler, "especially if jammed as I have been at times, when I was transfixed and could not move."

"That is one type," commented the Doctor, "what else?"

"The same conditions in a public hall, even though seated. That is all I can think of at present," observed Mrs. Wheeler.

"How about words and acts which will shock and paralyze with fear, which will transfix with tetanic rigor, produce spasmodic or cataleptic muscular contractions, or convulse with emotion?"

"Of course," apologetically replied Mrs. Wheeler.

"Now," said Dr. Austin, "if you will run it over in your mind, you will find that these are the very cases which exhibit the undeliberated acts of the subconscious. There is, however, one more factor that has so far escaped us. In the rash acts of emotionalism we have illustrations of premature and excessive reactions to all sensorial impressions. Not only does an individual cringe, jerk, or jump, at every abrupt noise showing excessive recoils, but his reactions become so reflex in character, and they occur so precociously that they are practically minus the usual associations with past experience memories. This type of individual generally acts first and thinks afterwards—he repents at leisure.

The Conversion of Hamilton Wheeler

"As a matter of fact, hyperesthetics and hysterics in general are rash actors. The member unit of a crowd acts rashly while in the crowd. The revival victim also acts as irrationally as he does emotionally, not with deliberation. One emotional impetus superimposed upon another attains an accrued stimulus which eventually finds explosive release, and that release is the motor activity which animates the victim to go to the rostrum, and is termed conversion. Outside of religion, and often inside, it activates to crime and vice. Not infrequently crime or vice, or both, directly follow from the revival stimulus. In practically all cases, it is a rash act born of passion and unmoderated by adequate, if any, deliberation. It comes too late to prevent the rash act."

The Doctor looked at his watch, and observing that he had permitted absorption in his subject to make him oblivious to the lapse of time, and that he had considerably overstayed the time allotted to this call, rose from his chair, took his niece by the hand in a more than usually tender farewell, and took his departure.

The Conversion of Hamilton Wheeler

Chapter X.

ON Mrs. Wheeler's invitation, Dr. Austin managed his affairs so as to get around in time to dine with her and Hamilton at seven o'clock, thus permitting of a longer evening together.

At the conclusion of dinner, and immediately after retiring to the living-room, Dr. Austin took up the thread of his discourse and Mrs. Wheeler reassumed the role of the interested auditor.

"Anything that disposes to mental morbidity," resumed Dr. Austin, "correspondingly predisposes to religion. The causative factors of insanity and of mental unbalance, in general foster religious fervor.

"In ancient times, war, famine, and pestilence, were the sheet anchor of priestdom, for they all fostered religion and superstition quite as much as religion fostered wars, and made the public gullible and yielding to priestly cunning. Most wars of history have been, directly or indirectly, religious wars.

"In the present great war in Europe, the rigors of life in the trenches, from exhaustion of the overwrought, resulting in psychoses and neuroses, monotonous and deficient food, off-duty periods of contemplation of more or less terror and resignation to impending death; and in those left at home, with monotonous diet and insufficient nutrition, worries and anxieties in anticipation of individual and national danger,

The Conversion of Hamilton Wheeler

or grief over personal losses, reduce the mind to a condition in which it is prone to give way to religious emotion.

"The tetany of grief from all causes, generally finds expression in emotion. In fact, emotion is the natural outlet for the tetany of pent up grief, and emotional grief easily shades into emotional religion. Emotion, from all causes, is so identical in its general characters, especially the motor one, that one cause may prepare the way for the exhibition of the characteristics of another. Thus it is that the emotion of grief, and other depressing emotions, leads to that of religion.

"The emotions of pathos, of sympathy, of sorrow, of music, of poetry, of eroticism, and of religion, are so similar that it is hardly an exaggeration to say that they are, as emotions, all in one and one in all. The successful evangelist consciously and designingly includes the majority of them in his propaganda, and his victims unconsciously and submissively add the remaining ones when they attain to conversion.

"The common expression of experiencing or feeling religion, is simply a characterization of the sense of emotion which is experienced in conversion, and which is afterwards reproduced in varying degrees upon the occasions of divers association of ideas, which are instigated by impressions which revive the original emotion under the law of repetition.

"The very process of a religious system which originally produces a sufficiently profound and violent emo-

The Conversion of Hamilton Wheeler

tion to attain conversion, together with the after program process of revivals, carried to a sufficient degree to dominate the lives of its victims, are decidedly pathogenic, and the clinical status is a morbid one. The psychologic status is one of derangement, and it is evidently produced as an aberration by artifice, and for a definite purpose.

"All morbid factors of daily life are predisposing causes, and prepare the victim for the superimposed acting causes which our Evangelists provide. Thus the morbidity of religious emotion is proved in its addition to the sum of pathological effects produced by known factors of disease.

"It is the dominant fugitive ego of the subconscious state that expresses itself as the delinquent and irrational. It is the type of the extreme credulousness produced by religious conversion, and that of the hypnotic automaton of suggestion.

"The individual soldier of the perfect military machines of Germany and Turkey has shown himself a subconscious automaton in whom the reactionaries of the despotic autocratic government have suppressed the higher consciousness, abolishing the higher strata, and leaving only the subconscious ego disciplined to abject obedience and extreme credulity.

"In the subconscious, subwaking hypnotic subject, we observe all of the characteristics of the subwaking self, which in the words of Dr. Boris Sidis is 'devoid of all morality; it will steal without the least scruple; it will

The Conversion of Hamilton Wheeler

poison; it will stab; it will assassinate its best friends without the least scruple. When completely cut off from the waking person it is precluded from conscience.' Thus does the German soldier of war differ from the interested soldier of the Allies, and even from the German citizen of peace. He is the automaton of the subconscious state, and the counterpart of the subwaking state of hypnotism. The equally disciplined and obedient slave of ecclesiastical browbeating, terrorization, and close organization and control, only, can show the same record.

"If you will pardon the digression, I think the German people are most interesting subjects of psychological analysis. I think you will agree with me that the German people of our country, as we know them, are not naturally quarrelsome, unscrupulous, or unlaw-abiding. In fact, we know that Germany is the most law-bound country in the world, the old Tzar-ridden autocratic Russia not excepted.

"It is true that acts of the Imperial German Government, the officials of which are composed largely of groups of hereditary princes and noblemen, as a class, are utterly devoid of scruple, honor, morality, or humanity, but this has been the case in more or less degree in other countries where such elements have had sufficient power, as history shows.

"The conversion of the law-abiding German citizen into the perfectly disciplined soldier, the perfect automaton, shorn of all independent activity and individu-

The Conversion of Hamilton Wheeler

ality, and collectively into a perfect military machine, was a process that repressed the individual reason, volition, and consciousness, to subconscious levels. Thus deprived of his personal reason and individual volition, he has become the most barbarous, cruel, and criminal animal of modern or ancient times. Rape, rapine, murder of old men, women, and children, wholesale destruction of all human habitations by fire and explosive, and of the world's food supply, including that upon which Germany must herself eventually draw or starve, has occupied them for nearly three years. Not only in those things I have named, but for lewdness and filthiness of acts, he has shown himself inferior to the lowest brutes.

"His equal has been seen only in the lust, cruelty, unfeeling brutality, and merciless atrocities of the fanatical Turks and some disciplined and iron oath-bound secret orders and other zealots of our own Christian Church, which engineered the Inquisition, Crusades, witch burnings, and other inhuman tortures and massacres. In other words, horrible to relate, fanatical religion alone has equaled the acts of this most unprincipled and atrocious autocracy of official degenerates. Nothing has surpassed religion in reducing man to that subconscious state which renders him lower than brutes, except perchance the present political appropriation of the same process by the Central Powers. Nothing has so corrupted American politics as that emotionalism which was made possible by religious instigation in this, the country of the revival plague.

The Conversion of Hamilton Wheeler

"Pardon me if I have bored you with an exuberance on this subject, but I can't give it thought at all without following it too deeply, in its many ramifications, to some conclusion. I am not only interested, but I regard it as one of the most important problems before our people today, not excepting the war. As you know, I have given it much thought in the past. I have many times felt strongly that the medical profession as a whole should take it up and express itself in no uncertain terms, yet to accomplish that, some few physicians would have to shoulder the bulk of the burden of it, and they would personally have to bear the brunt of the savage attack that would be sure to follow.

"For general reasons explained to you, showing causes for personal unscrupulousness of conduct, combined with a feeling of security in their official capacity, certain government officials are most unscrupulous and heartless in their propagation of national designs, and criminal in the exercise of legislative and executive authority. It has been truly said that governments are less ethical and less moral than individuals. We have ample illustration of that in the operations of the German Government leading up to and during the present war. Such cold calculations of wholesale murder, robbery, and indeed of any crime that it might be found of utility to commit in connection with the general plan, if contemplated by a single individual independently and carried out on a single victim, outside of the Government program, would be punished, even by that Government, as a capital offense.

The Conversion of Hamilton Wheeler

"Vandalism in Germany is unknown, everything is 'verboten;' there is no liberty, much less license. Yet as a soldier in neighboring countries, the German is one of the worst vandals the world ever knew.

"Here in America official public trusts are often enough corrupt, and official dishonesty and unscrupulousness are not uncommon, whereas in Germany, where the populace was long overburdened with taxes in preparation for this great war, there has been little official dishonesty. It was not through greater individual honesty, but because the Central Government conserved and eventually absorbed the funds.

"The fact is that German officials, who are so largely of princely, ducal, and feudal baron families of long standing aristocracy, have lived in the lap of luxury, are so sedentary of habit, overfed, and overbeveraged with wines and beer, and have so lowered their tissue density that we have in them, as in their Russian contemporaries, as a class, the most typical example in the world of the sthenic hyperesthetic, which I regard as most of all mankind inclined to premeditated and unfeeling criminality.

"The policy of some of the European Monarchies, that of permitting brutal treatment and a menial enslavement of new recruits to the armies, in which the men are kicked about and treated like dogs by their officers, is probably encouraged with a view of completely breaking down individualism and subordinating the will of the common soldier to the complete con-

The Conversion of Hamilton Wheeler

trol of the officer. The end result of all this is the imposition upon the subconscious ego of a salutary fear of the officers, which will at all times control the soldier's fully conscious acts. The brutalities observed increase, as a rule, where the soldiers themselves are most rough and barbarous. Thus Turkey leads, with the Balkan states a close second.

"In contrast to the typical Oriental, with his blunted sensibilities, stands the Oriental Gypsy, an individual of super-sensitiveness, not unlike the typical Oriental in treachery, unscrupulousness, lying, cheating, and supreme selfishness, yet otherwise like the Occidental hyperesthetic, they are high strung and are possessed of a fine ear and talent for music.

"It should not, however, be overlooked, as I have said, that the reduction of these men to subconscious automatons alone renders them naturally barbarous and cruel, which may account for those attributes in large measure, yet we know that all these Orientals are to no small degree oblivious to suffering, by virtue of their own blunted sensibilities. Their religious zeal and fanaticism also plays a part in the atrocities they commit. Thus, both natural and acquired attributes are involved.

"Most unfortunately, for a true or accurate concept of the psychology of ethics and morality, we are almost daily subjected to reading and hearing allusions to and characterizations of instigations of emotional manifestations as moral and spiritual forces and quickenings,

The Conversion of Hamilton Wheeler

and allied expressions which conceal the real nature of what are far from being expressions of spiritual forces or quickenings to ethical or moral betterment. To deceive people into wrong applications of terms to such commonplace feelings, is often to lead them into stamping what is evil as good. It also deceives the individual into making misinterpretations of the emotional expressions of others, as well as his own, and deifying and throwing a halo about that which is a truly animal functional activity, which is often abnormal, and is even rendered abnormal by such falsifications of natural phenomena.

"A mind, the separate special sense impressions of which have been confused and jumbled into chaotic conglomerations of undifferentiated vagaries and obscurities, should be expected to so functionate and produce an end-product which is also lacking in the faculties of differentiation, discernment, and discrimination.

"Differentiation in concept depends upon a correspondingly clear differentiation in perception. Abolish one and you abolish the other. When the mental faculties of differentiation are in abeyance, those of discernment, of discrimination, of decision, and hence of independent judgment, are equally in abeyance. Weaken one, and you weaken all those which are based on it.

"A mind lacking powers of differentiation, discernment, and discrimination, is lacking the foremost and most important elements of human intellectual require-

The Conversion of Hamilton Wheeler

ment. The possessor of such a mind is unfit for anything except to labor for someone else on periodic stipends. He may be managed by a capable wife, but personally he is without individual capacity. Many such persons are continually at the mercy of designing sharks, and the prey of artful deceivers. The religious side is always the weakest. It is always the point of vulnerability.

"It is only a brief series of little steps that leads from the ecstatic confusion of senses which is developed at the height of a revival-induced delirium, to one in which a morbid vividness of the evangelist's pictures find entrance to the sensorium, not only as *auditory*, but also as morbid *visual* impressions. The visual ones are the abnormal ones because they occur as visual *illusions* and appear real, however produced by no ocular impressions. They constitute sense deceptions, and foster hallucinations.

"Whatever foils or defeats distinctive perception, fosters confusion of thought, and it in turn is productive of loss of definition and direction. Thus mental confusion may range all the way from vague and obscure ideation to complete chaotic confluence. Panicky and frustrated states are often temporarily devoid of all voluntary control, so much so that their victims are helpless in the face of danger. Even the first law of nature (self preservation) is in abeyance. Persons so afflicted are said to lose their heads. Their intellectual control of voluntary acts, and even volition *per se*, are

The Conversion of Hamilton Wheeler

in temporary abeyance. The inhibition is here meaningless unless we understand how it acts. The laws that *there can be no volition without some degree of discrimination* and that *voluntary control of motor acts occurs in direct ratio to the power of discrimination exercised*, must be taken into account. The purpose and goal of voluntary action is fundamentally discriminative in nature. Thus 'volition' lacking discrimination, equally lacks purpose, direction, and definition. Such, therefore, is incoherent and non-cognitive."

"Uncle, dear," Mrs. Wheeler observed, "I do not wish to impose upon you, but there is yet another point that has not been explained, that which many church people highly regard as indicative of inception of the divine Spirit. In the process of conversion, when the period of struggle in the subject ends, there succeeds a sense of pleasure, of comfort, and delight, which is quite generally interpreted as due to a real attainment of grace and the Holy Spirit. Can that also be of animal origin?"

Dr. Austin smiled knowingly, and then proceeded to explain to her that: "In all cases of the tetany or spasmodic rigid contracture of the superficial tissues of the body, which are incident to the expression of profound fear and allied emotions, the blood content of the network of capillary vessels ramifying through the superficial tissues is ejected, and these tissues exhibit a local anaemia, and as a consequence, an asphyxia. Thus the skin is white and cold.

The Conversion of Hamilton Wheeler

"Unable now to obtain oxygen without the requisite blood supply, the poverty or absence of which is thus responsible for a resulting dilation of the capillaries which follows, the way is opened for a return rush of blood into the now dilated vessels, which entails a state of flushing or blushing, as it is called. This is accompanied by a sense of well being, buoyancy, optimism, and happiness. This is the state that is represented to those who have passed through its phases in the course of a revival conversion, as a sense of feeling of the Holy Ghost, of the nearness of God, of possessing Jesus, etc. It is that which many of the clergy are pleased to call a genuine *experience* of religion.

"It appears surprising that notwithstanding that this same serial experience or sensation is experienced apart from religion by everyone, many times during a lifetime, many continue to put on it the dogmatic interpretation whenever it occurs in a religious connection.

"There is, therefore, a fundamental and essential emotional feeling which may be regarded as the religious sense or religious experience, which the converted of all religions experience. When experienced by Christians, it is interpreted as experiencing or knowing Christ Jesus. The Evangelist Edward Payson Hammond used to ask his auditors whether they knew *about* God or actually *knew* him. The *actual knowledge* is this emotion sense, and is a fixed delusion.

"The Mohammedans interpret the same sense or

The Conversion of Hamilton Wheeler

feeling experienced in their religious emotions as of Mohammed, the Buddhists interpret it as of Buddha, the Brahmas interpret theirs as of Brahma, etc., according to their religious education. The devotee of one religion never experiences the emotional sense or knowledge of any God, prophet, or Christ Savior other than the one his religion provides for.

"The Christian revival conversion experience, culminating in what is termed *finding Jesus*, and in an emotional sensorial experience of actual knowledge of Jesus or any other form of deity or prophet of celestial spheres, must be regarded in all cases as one form or another of delusion, illusion, or hallucination, and therefore as morbid and injurious to more or less degree.

"The prolonged periods of inability to attain the emotional hallucination described by evangelists as experienced by many revival victims, must be regarded from the medical viewpoint as the experience of more normal persons, who less easily experience false sense impressions when set adrift under hypnotic suggestion to that goal. When they finally attain to it, we find it usually comes with ultimate local or general exhaustion. Prior to the onset of the exhaustion, in view of hesitancy to adopt a delusion, the confusion and perplexity fail of relief.

"When reason is in abeyance, it is truly surprising what people will accept unquestioned as facts that are too sacred even to reason about. Every little while

The Conversion of Hamilton Wheeler

someone, in complete ignorance of the accrued data on the subject, will present a so-called theory of some vital biological or physical process, which is generally diametrically incompatible with such data or facts already known. These theories, of course, promptly perish from inanition, under the law of the elimination of the unfit. That is the history of modern science in contrast to religion which gives us a fictitious account of creation.

"A few centuries ago when the world was minus the collection of data we now possess, any such theories might have been accepted as fact. If, when they were set forth, they were given out as God's word and eventually included in some ordained holy book, they would have been accepted as infallible fact.

"We now accept as God's word an eclectic composite relic of antiquity that was accepted in the ignorance of the ancients as truth, but which would not be so accepted today if just launched. The acceptance and consecration of the Bible by the ignorant illiterate ancients is the only thing that makes it acceptable today. There is now a mental halo surrounding it which the majority fear to question. Mental subordination is the consequence.

"Perhaps what goes farther than anything else in gaining public tolerance of revivals, is the public prominence given to evangelists as great agents of moral uplift. The evangelist represents Satan as the prince

The Conversion of Hamilton Wheeler

of sin and the instigator of all the sin in the world, in opposition to the church, and he (the revivalist) is the instrument of eradication of all this sin which he enumerates as including profanity, prostitution, dancing, alcoholic indulgence, tobacco and drug addiction, etc.

"As we have seen, evangelism and its emotional conversion do not, as implied, tend to improve, but rather to lower general morality. In proof of this, not only present day observation, but the history of religion in general, attests. The earliest profanity consisted of the oaths and ejaculations of the priests and devotees. The earliest prostitution was the sacred prostitution of temple worship. The earliest licentiousness was religious, some of the earlier religions were phallic, the earliest homo-sexual vices were committed by monastic devotees. The earliest alcoholic beverages were made and drunk with sacred ceremony, and later wine became consecrated as the token of the blood of the Savior. Alcohol has ever been a great agent for producing spiritual intoxication and as an instigator of holy ecstasies, inspirations, and visions of priests and other holy men.

"The earliest recorded falsehoods were uttered and written for the establishment of religion, the earliest forgeries of history were committed in substantiation of religion. The earliest fraudulent deceptions of mankind, of historical record, were those of Theurgy, Thaumaturgy, and Magic for the establishment and

The Conversion of Hamilton Wheeler

sustenance of religion. The Christian was no exception to the rule.

"As the great reader I know you to be, I know you are already familiar with these things. I do not mention them as necessarily indicative of a similar state of the priesthood or ministry in our day, but inasmuch as the greater stress of sanctity is put upon antiquity by the church itself, perhaps I would not be overstepping in citing it as illustrative of some of the earlier and less artificial expressions of religion.

"One of the things so savagely denounced and proscribed by modern revivalists, dancing, is historically the very acme of religious expression. Condemning it is like condemning obscenity when the Bible is overflowing with it, which only for being the canonized text-book of Christianity, would be forbidden by the very laws enacted by Christian bodies for the suppression of obscene literature in general, and which is in fact no more obscene, but simply disconnected with religion, which isolates it from and disidentifies it with religious emotion.

"Practically all dancing among primitive peoples and ancient civilizations was essentially religious, and most dances had their origin in forms of religious worship. Ritual dancing has been an accessory to religious rites from time immemorial, and the time was when there was no ritual without the dance. From the dancing priestesses of the sacred temples of antiquity, down to the dancing before the Lord of Old Testament days,

The Conversion of Hamilton Wheeler

to the dancing of the choral festival of the Essenes, to the dances of the Agapae, to the Christmas carols which were originally dances, to the dances of the Easter festivals, to the Christian ritual dances of France, which were joined in by priests and clergy, to the dances of the Shakers of our own day, all are religious, and expressions of religious ecstasy, exultation, and intoxication, as the funeral dances were of the opposite emotion.

“The dancing Dervishes of the Far East, as well as the participants of the dancing manias of the Middle Ages, were examples of religious ecstatic-intoxicated dancers, who manifested not only an ecstasy, but a spree, a debauch. These have ever been grossly religious. Ecstatic dancing, with its strong emotions and religious exultations, and its pleasant glow of excitement, predisposes at once to both the religious and sexual emotions.

“The ecstatic dancing of the early Christians, many of which occurred in the churches and were led by the prelates and priests, the wedding, funeral, and graveyard dances, were all religious, yet many of them were more licentious than the Apache dances of Paris. The most religious dances of history were the most licentious. Those of the sacred prostitutes of the temples, and the eventually suppressed dances of the early Christian Agapae, were examples.

“The undulatory motion generated by feeling in its physical discharges, finds in trained volitional danc-

The Conversion of Hamilton Wheeler

ing a counterpart in its rhythm and measured step. Especially is this true of religious ritual dances which were danced to hymn music. The ecstasy developed in this is well illustrated by the Shakers, who carried it to the point of producing well marked intoxication akin to that of alcoholism in all stages. The excessive dancing of the Dervish and medieval dancers exhibit highest degrees of breathlessness and delirious intoxication, and have ever been interpreted in the highest degree as of spiritual experience. How different is it all from the stately minuet!

"There is an old adage that people who live in glass houses should not throw stones, yet is it not paradoxical enough that these self-appointed censors should denounce all dancing of cultured Society in behalf of religion? Do they not also equally denounce religious superstructures which are built upon the very foundations of which they approve?

"Christians who are appalled at the nonsensical and unreasonable tenets of Christian Science, must be reminded that Christian Science propaganda would not succeed were it not for the underlying tenets of Christianity, which demand faith acceptance regardless of being diametrically opposed to science, history, and reason.

"He who endorses and fosters one thing which demands and depends upon the surrender of reason, should not balk at that which is outside the pale of what he thus endorses, even when it is contrary to

The Conversion of Hamilton Wheeler

scientific and general knowledge and beyond all reason, so long as he endorses that upon which it rests. Certainly Christian Science is only a superstructure of the Christian religion, and is no more mythical or mystical. Both embody Neo-Platonism. What it most lacks is the scientific element."

After a thoughtful pause, Mrs. Wheeler remarked: "Uncle, I have been impressed that all of your interpretations of the actions of revival processes thus far are not only physical, but that the essential effects of them are also in the final analysis entirely physical in their nature. It looks plausible enough as far as I am able to judge, but I can't yet see how revival songs have any more of a physical effect than any other."

"That is very simple," interjected Dr. Austin. "Probably the most vital function of animal life is breathing. You have perhaps heard the saying that we can go weeks without food, days without water, but only seconds without air. Whatever seriously disturbs breathing is the gravest of menaces to our equilibrium and consciousness, even life.

"You undoubtedly have read how the rolling and pitching of ships in rough and choppy seas are productive of faintness, dizziness, nausea, and vomiting, so-called sea sickness? That is largely due to disturbances of the rhythm of breathing. Revival hymns are quite typical as to rhythm, and are sung with a pronounced rhythm and swing, as well as dynamic force and momentum. The breathing of anyone singing them

The Conversion of Hamilton Wheeler

must be adapted to the prevailing rhythm of the music, and thus he is at the disposal of the artful choir master. Therefore we observe disturbances of breathing as the singing is led, now fast, now slow, at high rapidity, then suddenly coming to abrupt slowness, and long sustained notes.

"Not infrequently the singers of a great chorus, who, after letting out the voice freely in singing with considerable momentum the measured rhythm of a typical revival hymn, are brought by the choir master to a rather abrupt slow-down and then held to long sustained notes, involving a sudden change from short and rapid, to prolonged and slowed measures, often feel at that point a pronounced sense of what they designate as goneness in the stomach. Associated with this, especially on repetition, faintness and even nausea occasionally supervene.

"When one observes these crafty choir masters standing facing their great choirs, leading them with both arms in the air in full motion, craftily fluctuating the time and rhythm at will; when one sees the hypnotic effect, combined with the trafficking with their breathing just mentioned, he is not surprised that so many of the choir are so early and often converted.

"When one considers the conspicuous position occupied by the choir, and recalls the contagion tendencies of crowd psychology, he is not surprised that the whole program works out as it does, and that the members of the choir who are first converted, thanks to the

The Conversion of Hamilton Wheeler

breathing disturbances, a touch or more of stage-fright, and other factors to which they are subjected, set the example of 'hitting the trail' in full view of the audience, and that the auditors follow their example to the extent that they do.

"It must not, however, be overlooked that the rhythm of revival music verse carries with it uncoordinated imagery, which if prosaically uttered, subject to analytical reasoning, would not be admissible by persons of mediocre intelligence. Congregations, however, are crowds, and always as such, act in concert, and otherwise than by reason. Therefore in this respect they would be expected to act without any sort of deliberation. The imagery outlined in hymns becomes subconsciously impressed upon mind and memory, not as logical statement of fact, and subject to analytical examination as such, but as constituting a subconscious, and therefore insidious influence upon the subsequent later coloring.

"The poetic, which is the language of primitive man, now appeals to the primitive phases surviving in modern man. The Vedas, the psalms and hymns of the ancients have their counterparts in the lyrics and hymns of modern times. When giving expression to wholesome ideas, poetry and song will ever be a medium of word-painting of the joys of nature and of life, but as a medium of mental smuggling, they should be forever banished from our midst. Modern dissemination of knowledge on these subjects will help to accomplish

The Conversion of Hamilton Wheeler

it. I predict that the poets of the future will not be classed as degenerates by alienists, but that all poetry will have to attain to intellectual levels to find publishers, thus the wild incoordinate imagery will be eliminated as the unfit.

"All emotions, even when normally occurring, coming and going in the everyday life, are more or less wearing on and aging to the individual, the sum of the emotional reactions to the perturbations of a career being the aggregate factors of arterial sclerosis and the final attainment of senile degeneration. The normal or premature development of senility depends upon the total of life's vicissitudes weathered by the individual.

"As we have observed, the emotion is *normally* an *effect*, not a *cause*, and the *end* not the *beginning* of the individual reaction to impressions from without. The emotion is then the outward physical expression of the motor element of mentation, which has preceded and is the direct response to such emotional elements as poetry, music, etc., of the subject's experience.

"Unnatural or abnormal emotion may be artificially actuated, by a reversal of the normal process, by directly exciting a general or universal emotion by a combination of multitudinous ways and means, and secondarily by overwhelming the deliberative faculties with the momentum of this violent universal emotion. Such is the goal and attainment of the evangelist who subor-

The Conversion of Hamilton Wheeler

dinates the reason of his dupes to the momentum of musical emotion.

"Every student of psychology is more or less acquainted with the fundamental importance of repetition of spoken suggestion in impressing dogmatic and empirical statements upon the mind, and with the subconscious acceptance of such repetitions of spoken suggestions as *fact*.

"Repeated affirmations also, are well known to receive increased impelling force by emphatic, forceful, and even brutal dictums, decrees, and mandates. The hypnotist has long availed himself of these fundamental psychological laws; yet repetitions of recitation, of equal or greater multiplicity, in the rhythmical and emotionalistic singing of hymns, has not received the attention that its importance warrants.

"Emotion is normally the expression of the motor element of individual reaction to impressions from without, and is exhibited in inverse ratio to the mental and physical stability of the individual. It is normally and should always be exhibited in direct relation to the nature and importance of the exciting factor, when in excess of that, it is indicative of hyperesthesia of the individual. The response then becomes an excessive reaction for any degree of external impression. Thus music, poetry, romanticism, love, religion, joy, and sexual erythrism, all obtain excessive response in the physically unstable.

"According to Loren Jones, musical conductor of the

The Conversion of Hamilton Wheeler

Bob Jones revivals, 'A singing congregation is ten times as easy to preach to as one that does not sing.' The psychology of this is that the auditor who enters into the swing and rhythm of the tune, and simultaneously utters the sentences of the song, brings himself, as the French psychologists would say, '*en rapport*' with the movement. The repetition of sung verses reiterating the Savior status of Jesus by the congregation, definitely constitutes a process of auto-hypnotism, by virtue of which a multiplicity of repetitions of auto-suggestions of the fundamental doctrine of Jesus as the universal Savior of souls, establishes it as a fixed idea, which places its recipient in a mental state favorable to the reception of the exhortations of the evangelist and his individual workers to 'hit the trail.'

"A revival frequenter, who is ignorant of the existing historical and other evidence regarding the Bible, Jesus, and allied characters and events, and is thus unable to do any independent reasoning which would lead to a logical conclusion as to the truth or fallacy of the prevailing dogmas, is led exclusively by his own entering into the spoken reiteration of the tenets of the thus drilled-in doctrine, and also to its subconscious acceptance by him as an unquestioned truth.

"The oft repeated recitation of religious dogma, in order to be most effective, is most efficacious for revival purposes when least deliberated, and experience and observation teach us that deliberation of the sub-

The Conversion of Hamilton Wheeler

ject of sung verses is much less than that of the spoken ones. Here also, the rhythm, the melody, and momentum of the emotion of song, overrides the reason. The tenets, the dogmas, and doctrines of the words of a religious song are uttered by the singer in different forms in each stanza, while the chorus follows each with a perfect repetition.

"Apart from singing, an individual does not ordinarily say what he does not think, but especially if written to music that is tuneful, exhibiting a good rhythmic swing and an emotional quality, he recites affirmations over and over, in sentences and statements, any alleged facts of which he knows nothing and to which he has perhaps given no thought. It is well known that in everyday life, many repetitions of momentum of emotional and rhythmical music, combined falsehoods, have come to be believed by the storyteller. In the singing of religious hymns, one has to the momentum of emotional and rhythmical music, combined multitudinous repetitions of utterances of religious dogmatism which thus are far more potent than when instigated by spoken repetition alone.

"Inseparable from the subject of the psychology of the verses of hymns, is the psychology of hymn music. Hymn music possesses its own peculiar emotional and rhythmical values, but varied as to type of emotion to be developed for any occasion. Certain hymns exhibit an influence toward exaltation, others toward depression, some to joy, others to grief, some are cheerful,

The Conversion of Hamilton Wheeler

while others are mournful. Most revival hymns are sung with rapidity and force. There is a distinct momentum to their high velocity.

"The large choirs of revivals are not accidents. Not only do they give force and volume to their choir renditions, but good lead to congregational singing. The greater the volume and dynamic energy exhibited, the more complete is its compelling emotional sway, the more profound is the produced emotion to either exaltation or depression.

"Professor Bernheim, the medical hypnotist of Nancy, France, told his patients to eliminate all other ideas from the mind, look at him and think of nothing but sleep. The modern revivalist clears the mind of everything but the hymn-text wording, by the singing of hymns. He then commands their attention to himself by exhibitions of emotion, in both loquacity and motor agility. The other mental status, without which hypnotism is impossible, namely the narrowing of the field of consciousness, is, as I have explained to you, attained by the revival process of crowd hypnotism, by virtue of which the exercise of the full individual consciousness is so resisted that subconscious composite groups find expression.

"Alternately, the choir master gives the human top a spin, a real whirl of motor activity; the audience is then seated and the evangelist proceeds at once to avail himself of the choir master's imparted momentum. The top runs down, and the choir master repeats his

The Conversion of Hamilton Wheeler

operation several times. Sometimes the top is given a better spin by the extra impetus and momentum of the sway and swing of two or more songs in succession.

"The most pronounced results are obtained by the highest momentum of a spin, followed by the greatest violence of agitation by the evangelist. In all cases, the musical impetus is one of motor expression, of *positive* and of *active* participation, while the evangelistic part is one of instilling *mental* agitation and excitement, with the motor apparatus quiescent and passive or fixed. Such a state is thus one of unvented emotion.

"The evangelist's goal to be obtained is therefore a state of explosive instability, which, if carried to the bursting point, is attended by impulsive expression, even an outburst, which in such cases takes the form of a violent show of explosion of pent-up feeling in which suppressed motive force suddenly breaks its bonds and finds impulsive and rash expression.

"We should always bear in mind that many individuals are especially susceptible to evangelism by virtue of a special susceptibility to the emotion of music. Emotional persons always react more emotionally to music than others. The more emotional, the more are individuals swayed and captivated by it. Undoubtedly the typical features of great musical geniuses which caused Nordau to pronounce them degenerates, were the underlying bases of emotionalism which I have outlined to you. The same basic status that ren-

The Conversion of Hamilton Wheeler

dered them highly emotional, made them great musicians.

"Seldom, if ever, does one observe an unemotional person who is musical, or a very musical person who is not also emotional. We can therefore understand how and why music is emotionalizing, and some types are more than others."

"How intensely interesting," commented Mrs. Wheeler. "I had never dreamed so much was known regarding the effect of music upon mankind. However much we observe human fascination by music, certainly I never knew the explanation of how it operated. I read in *Musical America*, in the issue of April fourth, I believe it was, a most interesting article by Thuel Burnam, entitled 'Psychic Influence of Evil Virtuosi,' and quoting Alfred Human, if I remember correctly, to the effect that a race of recreant men, women, and children could be created by evil virtuosi of sufficient psychic strength. He remarked: 'Think of a child being engulfed in this psychic ocean—and understand why I pray that we will become sensible to the need of protecting those tender souls.'"

"That is indeed interesting, but not surprising," commented Dr. Austin, "when one recalls that until comparatively modern times the church itself was very suspicious of any music within its walls. Finally when it was gradually discovered how potent it is in accelerating the emotions and all the other effects I have mentioned, it has been progressively adopted more and more until it attained its present importance.

The Conversion of Hamilton Wheeler

"Singing of hymns appears superficially to be innocent enough, and it is difficult to bring oneself to a realization of any possible wrong in their objective or application. Religion itself, with all its faults, appears on the surface so associated with ethics that one unconsciously shrinks from believing that anything done in the name of religion is not wholesome for both body and soul. We are not concerned with whatever it may be so long as it does not exert a morbid influence. If it can be revised, reformed, or improved on that score I would be truly glad.

"Whenever religion or anything else is productive of emotionalism that unfits people for the strenuous demands of modern life, it becomes a curse instead of a blessing, and as a wolf in sheep's clothing it is all the more powerful, for in such cases we fail to avoid what we should or would, did we but realize its true significance.

"At the present time we are at war with four European nations. We are called upon to send our best young manhood to fight the battles all over again for which our forefathers fought and died. We are again fighting, in the words of the immortal Lincoln, that we as a republic 'shall endure and not perish from the earth.'

"The experience of all of the combatants of the great war has demonstrated the military unfitness of the hyperesthetics, or as they variously call them, the neurotics, the neuropaths, and psychopaths, according

The Conversion of Hamilton Wheeler

to their dominant manifestations. Such men, whether products of emotion instigating religion, of alcohol, sexual vices, or what not, owing to their hyperesthesia and irritable weakness, are unable to withstand the rigors of discipline and the hardships of modern warfare. Their excessive reactions to the many sensorial impacts of the soldier, combined with their lack of stamina, tend to their early mental collapse. Their innate timidity predestines them as cowards and predisposes them to surrender and desertion when opportunity presents. Their lack of resolution and courage makes them poor material for a charge or for withstanding an assault from an enemy. Their natural disloyalty and proclivities to treachery make them unreliable soldiers. Their restlessness, discontent, and disgruntledness predispose them to become discordant elements in the ranks, and nuclei of disaffection. They may volunteer as a result of a whim and be ready to break away from the service before they see real war. Their unscrupulousness is exhibited in intrigues, subterfuges, and malingering. Their veracity is so bad that they cannot be trusted with any duty involving moral integrity.

"Their general weakness of character predisposes them to become the prey of all manner of human vultures and exploiters, and to be swept off their feet by their own capricious and frivolous fascinations and fanaticisms. Especially the asthenic types, the subjects of extremes of irritable weakness, are prone to be-

The Conversion of Hamilton Wheeler

come paralyzed, either rigid or quivering with fear, which is incapacitating. The insomnia to which these cases are especially disposed, even in times of peace, completely incapacitates them for recuperation when off duty. The mental breakdown often follows the prostration incident to the addition of insomnia to the excessive recoils to the vicissitudes of active conflict which thus make sleep impossible. A soldier's inability to adapt and conform to mass action, in complete restraint of independent action, is attended by explosive outbursts when the limit of his tolerance has been exceeded. Then is when the soldier goes to pieces. After the first convulsive outburst, if the soldier continues in the ranks or trenches, the second one is produced more readily than the first, and they continue progressively until the complete one ends the career. The order of events closely simulates that of the revival.

"General Funston well knew this when he refused to permit the Baptists to emotionalize his troops on the Mexican border, yet permitting non-emotional forms of religion. He was wise from the military viewpoint. He could not afford to have his men subjected to convulsive outbursts in the form of religious conversions as a part of their preparation for the then anticipated Mexican strife. I anticipate that many of the products of this revival recruiting station will be found unfit for the excessive rigors of the European conflict, the required stamina for which exceeds by far that of any previous war of history."

The Conversion of Hamilton Wheeler

Glancing at the clock, Dr. Austin suddenly realized that he had remained until an unusually late hour, and apologizing to Mrs. Wheeler for possibly boring her with an excessive elaboration of his theme, however mutually interesting, and thanking her for his most enjoyable dinner, hurriedly took his departure.

The Conversion of Hamilton Wheeler

Chapter XI.

AS DR. AUSTIN pondered upon Hamilton's condition, he thought of his old friend, Dr. Allen McLean, another alienist, equally eminent with himself, with whom he had for many years been associated in hospital and institutional practice. Many great cases had they studied, analyzed, and treated in perfect co-operation. In some which were unusual and baffling, the clue which one could not find would occur to the other, so they grew to have more and more confidence and respect for each other with the lapse of time.

Dr. Austin and Dr. McLean had both studied many border-line and pronounced cases of insanity which had originated in religious excitement, and naturally the case of Hamilton, in which Dr. Austin was now so deeply interested, he wished to discuss in every phase with his old professional friend. The question that most perplexed him in this respect was the initial bringing of Dr. McLean into the case without creating undue solicitude on the part of Mrs. Wheeler, or exciting suspicion in Hamilton that he was at all mentally deranged, which would certainly depress him, and in any event make the case more difficult to handle.

Dr. Austin thoughtfully considered the idea of bringing Dr. McLean into the case until he next saw Mrs. Wheeler, when he thus broached the idea: "Helen, my dear, you know how long I have known and respected

The Conversion of Hamilton Wheeler

Dr. McLean, and how close we have been professionally, both in private practice and hospital service for a quarter of a century. You know we have been like brothers, and in fact more intimate and congenial than many brothers. For many years our relations have also been most confidential. He has repeatedly taken me into his confidence, as I have him, at first in exclusively professional matters, then in all manner of subjects, after each of us found the other entirely loyal and trustworthy.

"You know how interested I am in Hamilton's case, and how anxious I am to neglect nothing that may be beneficial to him. Now I want to bring Dr. McLean's experience and mind to bear on this case. It can do no harm, it will go no further, and it may be productive of much good. I would then have someone with whom to discuss the matter when we are by ourselves. You know how satisfactory it is to talk over any subject by progressive interchange of ideas. The wealthy always avail themselves of such advantages, and certainly you should when it will cost you nothing."

Mrs. Wheeler was startled at the suggestion of having the additional services of such a distinguished neurologist as Dr. McLean without cost, and inquired anxiously how such a thing could be accomplished. She knew of the universal prevalence in the medical profession of gratuitous professional services between physicians, and to those financially dependent upon them, and which is also based upon the general ac-

The Conversion of Hamilton Wheeler

ceptance of the fact that he who is least agitated and disturbed by worry and anxiety, is the best qualified to render his maximum service; but Hamilton's case, at least so far as Mrs. Wheeler knew, did not come within that scope.

Dr. Austin at once caught her point of view, and proceeded to allay all apprehension on that score. "You see, my dear," he continued, "Dr. McLean and I often co-operate with each other on difficult cases without pay, sometimes when the patients are virtually paupers. We do much purely for the advancement of science. The public has a right to expect much more from us specialists, as exclusively devoted to our special departments, than from general practitioners of medicine, and in fact general practitioners themselves continually refer their most difficult cases to us because they also expect more from us. To meet these demands we have to be continually solving new problems, and the most difficult ones that we meet in this way. This work we invariably do together. These are the subjects of our many talks together. Being the subjects of our greatest interest, these are the subjects of our gossip. So you see you can safely leave that part of it to me. This will not be regarded as a charitable, but as a personal case, personal to me. The fact that it is *my* case is enough."

The thought of having so much done for Hamilton that she could never have afforded, touched her deeply. A pathetic emotion was betrayed by the moistening

The Conversion of Hamilton. Wheeler

of her eyes and the quiver of her lip. She could not help thinking what would she have done, what would another mother do in the absence of this gratuitous medical skill, otherwise so beyond her reach financially. Would she, in that event, have entered Hamilton as a pauper for free treatment? She could not restrain the thought that if civil governments permitted such maiming of an innocent public, they should take care of the human derelicts so produced. Then she thought of the increase of general taxation that would be involved in such an undertaking, and did not mention it.

Dr. Austin became somewhat impatient at the apparent hesitancy of Mrs. Wheeler to reply to his proposition. So much had passed through her mind that she did not appreciate the lapse of time, but observing Dr. Austin's restlessness, she was reminded that he was waiting for a reply, and she hastened to give her assent with pathetic tones of gratitude.

The next question was the introduction of Dr. McMcLean into the case without exciting Hamilton's apprehension. All these things have to receive careful attention in all mental cases, and are not overlooked by experienced neurologists. Hamilton had never met Dr. McLean, and it was first arranged for an apparently accidental meeting.

By prearrangement, the next day, Dr. Austin telephoned Mrs. Wheeler that he was detained in his office by a consultation with Dr. McLean, and he would appreciate it if she would bring Hamilton over to his of-

The Conversion of Hamilton Wheeler

fice, instead of his calling on her. To this she assented, and turning to Hamilton asked him to accompany her to her uncle's office. As Hamilton had overheard the conversation, he went along without asking any questions.

On arriving at their destination they were promptly received in the Doctor's private office. Dr. McLean was introduced, and immediately politely remarked that he would hurry along and not intrude on their time and privacy. Dr. Austin took his hand in his, and holding it, observed: "Doctor, with the consent of Mrs. Wheeler and Hamilton, I would like to bring to your attention what I regard as a most interesting case. Not because it is rare, but because we have not studied this class of diseases as we should in the past, as we have met them in a more isolated way."

Dr. Austin continued: "As this young man is my nephew and heir, perhaps he will not feel imposed upon if we use him as a study for the advancement of medical science, so long as we agree not to hurt him in any way."

Turning to Mrs. Wheeler, Dr. Austin remarked: "We have a pretty good grasp of this type of cases, but not so good as we shall have in a little while. The hospital at the tabernacle is being well patronized, and while to be sure the physicians in charge there possibly follow up these cases to some extent, yet many of them will sooner or later come to our attention, and probably in large numbers. We shall see them in both hospital and private practice."

The Conversion of Hamilton Wheeler

"You see," said Dr. Austin, "since the so-called Great Awakenings, of Solomon Stoddard in five 'harvests,' from 1679 to 1718, of Jonathan Edwards, Stoddard's grandson, of Whitefield from 1740 to 1770, of the Wesleys up to 1790, those of James McGready and the McGee brothers from 1799 to sometime prior to 1815, and C. G. Finney in 1832 and later, they have exhibited their morbid effects before our time, and the physicians of those periods have left us practically nothing in the way of elucidating studies of the cases then manufactured by the wholesale. In fact, we must remember that neurology and psychiatry were then practically unborn."

"Much harm has undoubtedly been done by all the evangelists you have mentioned," said Dr. McLean, "but I have been impressed that our present evangelist imitates an early New Englander: James Davenport more closely than any other, both in methods and evil affects. This Connecticut minister yelled at his congregation at the top of his voice and to his utmost lung capacity: 'You poor unconverted creatures in the seats, in the pews, in the galleries, I wonder you don't drop into hell! It would not surprise me. I should not wonder at it if I should see you drop down this minute into hell. You Pharisees, hypocrites, now, now, now, you are going right into the bottom of hell! I wonder you don't drop into hell by scores and hundreds,' etc. He also, not unlike our present ex-sport, came out of the pulpit, stripped off his upper garments, and got up

The Conversion of Hamilton Wheeler

into the seats and leaped up and down several times, clasped his hands together, and cried out: 'The war goes on, the fight goes on, the Devil goes down, the Devil goes down.' Davenport then began stamping and screaming dreadfully. The emotional contagion was complete, and many of his audience fell into fits and to uttering shrieks. His performances were ended by his arrest and adjudgment as insane, as I expect the career of his present-day parrot to end."*

As soon as Hamilton was ready, the two physicians proceeded methodically to many curious tests. The jerk reaction on striking the leg just below the knee-cap, the ankle reaction elicited on an abrupt movement of the foot, the sensation of the surface of the body was carefully gone over, and many others too numerous to mention. Then they put Hamilton through a species of third degree to determine his mental status. All this Dr. Austin had purposely deferred until the preliminary excitement had passed off, and until Dr. McLean could be present and participate in it.

Mrs. Wheeler looked on curiously. During the physical part of the examination she observed: "Uncle, I don't see how a mental cause can result in anything so organic or physical as you appear to be looking for."

Dr. Austin smiled knowingly, and said: "My dear, that is a very common, but a very serious error. Some of the most serious diseases with which we have to cope are of mental or emotional causation. Of course, everyone knows of St. Vitus' Dance and allied afflic-

*See Appendix D.

The Conversion of Hamilton Wheeler

tions resulting from fright, of hysteria following panics, etc., but we know that Raynaud's disease, with dead fingers and even gangrene of the extremities, may and does follow very severe fright, while diabetes not infrequently is caused by the shock-emotion of sudden loss of fortune and the like. Many cases are on record of development of Bright's disease and cancer following profound emotions of grief, protracted anxiety and worry sufficient to cause continued insomnia, and a sustained state of intense perturbation."

"I would assure you," interposed Dr. McLean, "that this very idea in the public mind that everything from a mental cause is of but a transient mental condition and is effaced simply by a change of the mental attitude, as of a change of religious belief, or from depression or pessimism, is most unfortunate. It is doing a vast amount of harm, not only by causing people to neglect such cases of apparently insignificant consequences of super-emotion, but also to neglect these *causes* of emotion as unimportant, owing to which, public apathy toward revival injury is almost universal.

"Only by much admonition to parents have we been able to impress upon them the possible injury induced by frightening children as a part of their measure of discipline. Telling them ghost, boogy, and burglar stories, and producing terror for fun is most pernicious, and it is for the same reason that terrorizing them by apprehensions of death, of eternal burning in hell, and picturing hell and hordes of devils, is such a crime against the little ones that laws should be enacted

The Conversion of Hamilton Wheeler

to punish it. Indeed, the word religion need not be mentioned in the statutes of such general protective measures."

"One reason, Helen," observed Dr. Austin, "that we have not seen more of these cases in the past, is that revivals are the greatest institutions of proselytism to Christian Science and kindred cults ever invented. It is a singular fact, and it was commonly observed at the time, that the earlier revivals were the dependable recruiting agencies of the New England Shakers, who, being celibates, were deprived of the accessions of their own children to membership. They thrived, however, exclusively on the recruits from the harvests, who were converted by the revivals which were held for the benefit of regular orthodox Evangelical churches.*

"The emotional upheaval produced by the revival is productive of an intense desire on the part of its victims for rest and peace, and for a restoration of their former mental balance and sense of poise. Their continued sense of restless instability, which, owing to their insomnia, is well nigh continuous for the twenty-four hours of the day, impels them to act and continue to act till they obtain some kind of relief. True, stren-

*On the origin and sustenance of Shakerism from early revivals, see Charles Nordhoff's *Communistic Societies of the United States*, New York, 1875, pp. 119-131. See also *Spiritual Wives*, Phila. 1868, pp. 347-351, letter of Rev. John H. Noyes to W. H. Dixon, its author, showing evolution from revivals to Shakerism, evolution from religious to sexual love and polygamy, the role of revivals as breeders of social irregularities and revolutions, and the morbid results of revivals involving the evolution to Shakerism as exhibited by the confession of Marquis L. Worden. See Appendix E.

The Conversion of Hamilton Wheeler

uous measures are made to keep track of and corral them before they can get away from the evangelical sphere of influence, but everyone has his or her friends, and there are nowadays most always one or more 'Scientists' or 'New Thinkers' among them, who get them without delay. Those cults make a specialty of this type of cases. One experience meeting attendance assures them of the past success of the cult in similar cases, and the rest is easy."

Hamilton had been attentively listening to all Dr. Austin had said, and he now lost no time in asking if some such thing would do him any good. Dr. Austin answered with a merry twinkle in his eye: "You might try it, my boy, except for the valuable time you would lose if you deferred medical treatment pending such a trial. The more promptly you are properly treated, the easier and sooner will be your complete recovery.

"In such a treatment some degree of religious ecstasy and of exaltation must be produced to sustain you at all. Nothing would be done to build up your general health, and the required course of Bible and text-book reading would add to your present school demands on your time and energies. We can do much more for you if you give up all effort and anxiety to graduate this year. One of our problems would be to make all these ends meet. I would like to send you to the country, or for an ocean voyage as a part of the building up program."

"But tell me frankly, Uncle, do these cults really cure and do what they claim?"

The Conversion of Hamilton Wheeler

"Yes," responded Dr. Austin, "a certain percent of their cases do become practically well, either through the suggestions of the operators or healers, or nature, as, of course, a certain percentage of cases run a course and get well, and would without anything being done. Yet others get worse and die."

Dr. McLean leaned forward, and addressing himself to Hamilton said: "All hypnotic suggestion depends upon the personality and method of the operator. Suggestion in the waking state is not as powerful and efficient for therapeutic purposes as it is when administered when the patient is in a state of hypnotic sleep, and yet the Nancy (French) school never produces *deep* sleep, but gives much therapeutic suggestion exclusively in the waking or semi-waking state."

"To continue on the answer of your previous question," observed Dr. Austin to Mrs. Wheeler, "there are many ailments produced through the mind, and though as first caused they are simply derangements, they become organic diseases that no mere suggestion will influence. Any area or organ of the body will promptly deteriorate when the blood is deflected from the capillaries that supply its oxygenation and nourishment. 'It is akin to turning the course of a river away from a besieged city. If persevered in till all available supplies are exhausted, all the inhabitants will rapidly die. Abnormality will precede death. The survival would be solely a matter of duration of the deprivation. Religiously imposed terror is like any other in its effect

The Conversion of Hamilton Wheeler

upon the animal body, the blood is driven into the great venous trunks along the spine, simulating the state of death, leaving the surface and extremities as white and cold as they are bloodless, and thus asphyxiated.

"The suggestion treatments of Christian Science and the so-called New Thought cults, are on the order of the Nancy school of hypnotism, but are less efficacious than the French methods, for the dual reason that they are less profound in exclusively waking states, and also because the cult treatments are not scientifically and discriminatingly applied by expert students of the whole subject. These healers are quite entirely ignorant of the diseases treated, and exercise no discrimination in the adaptation and application of treatment to different cases. They also know nothing of any but faith healing practices. It is one and the same treatment for all cases, and it is thus necessarily a hit or miss affair. If a general education and training underlaid their therapeutic efforts, it is safe to say their treatment would be more varied and discriminated, and their results would be much improved."

"I thank you heartily," said Hamilton. "I see and appreciate fully your viewpoint. I am content to trust my case to scientific specialists. I am not particular about any special fad in the treatment of my case. If you can only bring me back to my original strength and capacity, I will never cease to express my gratitude. Now if you are through with me for the present, I would like to go home and lie down a little while.

The Conversion of Hamilton Wheeler

Mother will take any prescription and directions you agree upon. Good night."

He then returned home.

After Hamilton was safely out of hearing, Dr. Austin remarked: "One hardly knows where to begin or end discussion of so enormous and unbroken a field as we have in the subject of the psycho-pathology of religion."

"Especially," rejoined Dr. McLean, "in the time remaining to us. There are so many factors adroitly blended together in the general revival scheme of the present day, that one is at a loss to discern which is the most potent or important. They all seem to be worked in just where they belong and where they will be most efficacious in the eventual accomplishment of the end result."

"I have noted," observed Dr. Austin, "that perhaps the most important respect in which the present evangelist differs from his less successful predecessors in this field, are his own emotional activity, his rapid fire loquacity, and, most potent of all, the violence of his assaults and the shock and traumatism to the sense organs and the receptive tissues beyond of his auditors, caused by his vehement and deafening shouting, his stentorian and thundering emphasis of his affirmations, of his galling imprecations, acrimonious and envenomed invectives, and his brutal denunciations of his opponents. The end results, the production in the auditor of a sense of conviction of sin, is, in the opin-

The Conversion of Hamilton Wheeler

ion of the Rev. Alfred Sheldrick (who is now suing Billy Sunday for \$25,000.00 for breach of contract, in violating the valuable literature and postcard concessions at the tabernacles), the point in which Sunday excels his nearest approaches among the most successful revivalists of the present generation. This induced sense of conviction of sin is basically one of profound depression, and is the immediate reaction expression of the violence and traumatism of the bombarding efforts of the evangelist."

"It is observed," interposed Dr. McLean, "that the threshold of the sensorial receptive tissues of the brain exhibit a remarkable capacity for violence of impressions, and for recuperation from all outrages of their function. Even when subjected to fatigue exhaustion it quickly recuperates, and exhibits the effects only in loss of tissue density, and hence in precocious and excessive subsequent reactions.

"What I have said of the tissues of the sensorial threshold, however, cannot be said of the distribution to distal engramic tissues beyond which are exhibited end results of all degrees of tetanic rigor, and consequent functional inhibition when subjected to violence of sense impressions.

"In all cases, from all causes, when the nobler engramic or memory recording tissues are thus inhibited or in abeyance, and the primitive elements are freed from the restraining influence of the modifying nobler elements, the individuals exhibiting it manifest the de-

The Conversion of Hamilton Wheeler

graded attributes of the vicious, the unscrupulous, the immoral, and the criminal.

"In some cases the two mental elements exhibit such marked contrast and separate identities that they are characterized as instances of double consciousness, and in some cases as dual personalities, which are individually analyzable, the good and evil entities, the Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde of psychology. We observe the normally full conscious group, on the one hand, and the morbid or subconscious group, on the other, the latter one of which shows itself only as a partial group, and an incomplete fraction of a full one.

"In the researches in the domain of double consciousness which have so wonderfully elucidated that department of psychology, it was discovered a number of years ago that some fully conscious individuals exhibit such a complete division of their conscious from their own subconscious egos, that they can actually communicate with them. Just as individual units of crowds are not conscious of the roles played by the subconscious elements in their supposedly entirely voluntary acts, we are not ordinarily conscious of the role of the part played in our thoughts and acts by our subconscious groups.

"A planchette, which is a little board about the size of the open hand, is set, generally on three sensitively revolving small and light castors. If a person exhibiting a duality of his consciousness now rests his hand on it lightly, touching it only with the tips

The Conversion of Hamilton Wheeler

of the fingers and thumb, and silently thinks or audibly asks questions; after a little wait, accompanied perhaps with some degree of restlessness, a pencil adjusted in a hole through the board for the purpose, and the point resting lightly on a sheet of paper on the table, will write answers to the questions, such as are possible to the subconscious groups of mental impressions of that individual, but frequently of things of which the person has not at that time conscious knowledge or memory. The original source of this knowledge can later be determined by questioning the individual when in the hypnotic state, at which time the subconscious ego finds expression as it does in the involuntary writing with the planchette.

"Perceptions of subconscious groups which have never attained recognition of the conscious attention, sense impressions of such early youth that the conscious pictures at the time were inadequate, and things and events which have been forgotten, are among the subconscious ego finds expression as it does in external expression by the planchette and by hypnotism.

"On the promise that that which attains to the attention, is that which finds unity and focus, it is obvious that subconscious groups when freed from the repressive stress of stronger representations, are then enabled to focus independently and give expression to the subconscious ego. The instances of induced temporary abeyance of the stronger representations in the

The Conversion of Hamilton Wheeler

mental conclave, by hypnotism and in planchette writing are illustrative of artificially facilitating a lower grade and potential focus of a sub-group or fugitive ego in an outward expression. In hypnotism we have apparent suppression of the stronger groups, whereas in planchette writing, it appears rather as affording an outlet for weak, independent groups, not otherwise possible under the existing collective stress which is not materially reduced."

"That is the most interesting thing you have told me yet," enthusiastically commented Mrs. Wheeler, "but I always thought that the planchette and hypnotic clairvoyance were utilized exclusively to communicate with the spirits of the dead."

"Well, that is true," replied Dr. Austin, "since before every mystery is elucidated, a supernatural explanation has always been given to it.

"In the cases of the planchette and clairvoyance, whether the spontaneous one of abnormal states or that of hypnotism, the subconscious groups of perceptions were not recognized as belonging to them by the conscious personalities, so they were interpreted as and communicated with as disembodied spirits. These observations were at one time regarded as the most perfect proofs of spiritualism, but now no one believes in such nonsense but those who are ignorant of the truths elucidated by psychology.

"Not unlike many persons who choose to believe religious dogma because they so want it to be as rep-

The Conversion of Hamilton Wheeler

resented, many persist in remaining dupes of spirit mediums because they prefer to believe they are communicating with their beloved dead. They don't want to know any psychology which will provide any other interpretation of these things."

Dr. McLean remarked: "I think comparatively few realize the full significance of the law that emotion and reason occur in inverse ratio to one another, or appreciate the great evil imposed when emotionalism is artfully fostered and intellection is thus artificially retarded or inhibited. The crime of purposeful instigation of wholesale emotionalism at the expense of reason is especially pernicious in democracies where it is most important to encourage and develop independent reasoning among individuals empowered with suffrage, and in this age when both men and women are so completely organized into various mutually hostile camps economically. It is obvious that individuals, who are bereft of reason and are too easily swayed by every emotional harangue of demagogues whom they thus permit to do their reasoning for them, are a menace to any community.

"Women have in the past been more amenable to the emotional sway of demagogues than men, and as might be expected, have been the leaders in fanatical demonstrations, and riots of industrial disagreements. Now that women are quite universally succeeding to suffrage in our country, it is more than ever important that they should cultivate and develop emotional control and the exercise of reason.

The Conversion of Hamilton Wheeler

"Most unfortunately, there has long been manifested a disposition on the part of public speakers and writers to idealize and even to deify that half deliberated and half emotional faculty, most common in women and children, termed *intuition*. Like all functional processes of mental type, intuition is based more or less on hereditary as well as acquired human experience, but it is composed of thoughts and decisions which are launched emotionally and prematurely in a but partly reasoned-out manner, ignoring many important factors which not infrequently appear on the mental horizon, after a deed is done, words have been uttered, or a fit of frenzied fanaticism has passed off, often too late to mend.

"Theologians have characterized intuition as divine, poets have pictured it as sublime, gallants have glorified it as the ideal mentality of the fair sex, and none have combated it as a menace to modern womanhood, as it should be to all, other than the women of bygone ages, who were the dolls and playthings of men, and had neither rights nor responsibilities other than as wife and mother."

"I think," interposed Dr. Austin, "everyone has noted the effort of religionists to deify intuition, but I am convinced that it occurs parallel with impulsive expression and super-loquacity in general, and in those individuals in whom oral and other physical expressions commonly antedate anything like adequate deliberation of the subject of the utterance. The alco-

The Conversion of Hamilton Wheeler

holic combines immature deliberation of expressed thought with discontinuity, a child exhibits less continuity and greater impulsive expressiveness of immature deliberations than a woman. Women exhibit higher thought continuities than children, but to the extent that they are intuitive in their mental operations, they are inversely deficient in reason.

"Intuition is very highly the expression of subconscious groups. The more sensitive and impressionable the person the more will the subconscious groups be crowded with immature impressions which have been transmitted with such velocity and force that they have made their impress, and been later reproduced as immature perceptions. One thing which I think is neglected by psychologists in general, and which needs reconsideration, is that ordinarily in the due course of events, an individual mentally weighs and passes upon or interprets all his perceptions as they come to him as crude impressions.

"Each more or less elaborated current impression, in turn, as a perception complex, later reacts upon future current perceptions in the role of a past one, and so on *ad infinitum*. In this manner accrued past impressions are brought to bear, in their elaboration, upon the current ones. We have so far considered only the extent to which current impressions are elaborated by the interaction of preceding complexes, and without a thought as to whether the past ones *per se* were perfect or imperfect. They, of course, were subject to

The Conversion of Hamilton Wheeler

the same vicissitudes as are now encountered by the present or current impressions, and if they were imperfectly elaborated or made faulty by imperfect antecedents, all their products must be analyzed with that fact in view.

"We should, therefore, in the last analysis, give heed to an individual's pedigree of mental synthesis, and of all his past mental habits and vices. If current impressions are ever so well elaborated by imperfect past perceptions, we have as imperfect a product as we would have with an incomplete elaboration, when the interacting past perceptions were normally perfect. The mental product is thus the sum of an individual's accrued *past* crude and elaborated impressions in elaboration of a *current* impression which brought the interaction of the past one into being."

"I feel strongly," said Dr. McLean, "that a most important, though neglected reason why over-forceful and violent sense impressions are of such a low order of intellectual value, is on account of their high velocity of transmission and violence of impact on and through the sense organs and the receptive tissues beyond, and that the incident modifying reactions are so incomplete in eliciting associated reproductions, which are necessary for their proper interpretation and elucidation as ripe perceptions, that when they are called into association with future perceptions, the resultant deliberative process is defective from this cause, as well as from any subsequent ones which might be

The Conversion of Hamilton Wheeler

due to deficiency of association of these as past perceptions with subsequent current ones.

"An individual who is super-sensitive and super-impressionable from the usual underlying physical status of low density of tissue, with its typical excessive reactions to all stimuli from without, and who thus is the personal equivalent of the normal man who is the recipient of ultra-violent sense impacts, must in the nature of things, in every defective mental operation in which current sense impressions are imperfectly, and incompletely deliberated, leave an imperfectly modified perception registered for participation in the current deliberations of the future, wherein the new sense perceptions are dependent upon the groups of prior ones for the integrity of their functional product. So you observe, our best thought comes, not only from the *quantity*, but also the *quality* of past representations combining in it. Also we should consider that the same physical causes inherent in an individual, and the same external causes of excessive reaction, with their concomitant imperfect and incomplete associated inter-reactions, produce a progressive and accumulative deteriorating effect upon the mind commencing with the beginning of the personal defect, or the excessive impacts on the normal individual from without.

"In time, the registered past impressions of abnormal crudeness may outnumber the other ones of normal integrity, and result in defective deliberations for a long period of progressive purgation of the

The Conversion of Hamilton Wheeler

long accruing saturation of perceptions of the past. Thus is observed the potency of prolonged periods of hyperesthesia of the subject and of drilling in dogmas of faith over long periods of time in normal subjects, in influencing future years of mental activity.

"These defective past impressions of the full conscious values, must be regarded as on a par with weaker ones which never attain conscious attention, and are unmodified by conscious deliberation owing to that fact. The difference is one of degree only. The separation from consciousness of subconscious groups, is less completely exhibited by these intermediate ones."

Mrs. Wheeler arose, apologizing that she hesitated to break into this most interesting discussion as she was eager to hear more of it, but the lateness of the hour compelled her to return to her home.

Dr. Austin quickly said: "I hope you have taken no offense at the remarks on intuition."

"Not at all," she promptly replied, "I have never had the gift of intuition, and never regarded it highly in other women. I am not one of those women like cousin Martha, who are sensitive of the mental attributes or jealous on the economic position of women. I hope for growth and betterment in both sexes, but I am willing to trust our best men as the best friends of women, and I have more confidence in them than in the class of suffragette disturbers of the peace who set themselves up as self-appointed champions of my

The Conversion of Hamilton Wheeler

sex. I wish all women could interpret themselves and adapt themselves in the light of some of the knowledge I have had the good fortune to acquire from you medical men."

Thanking Dr. McLean sincerely for his kind interest and attention to Hamilton's case, while cordially grasping his hand, then turning to Dr. Austin and affectionately kissing him, she bade both good-bye and hurried back to her home, whither Hamilton had some time before preceded her.

After her departure, Dr. Austin observed enthusiastically: "If all women were like Helen Wheeler, there would be no need of feminist movements, nor for a new movement now to solve the problems *why women are so*: why women sustain all sorts of mysticisms, religions, and philosophies, so-called, both Oriental and Occidental, and continue to cultivate and deify emotions, intuitions, ecstatic imaginations and visions, with all their connected morbidities of mind and entailed enslavement to venal institutions which effectually forestall woman's *intellectual* advancement, which should precede every other. If all were like my niece, men would not err in entrusting everything to them. Perfect woman is the ideal of all men, but man must help to perfect her, both physically and mentally."

"I appreciate the force of your statement," commented Dr. McLean. "I could not help but think of the contrast between your two nieces. I know Mrs. Wheeler is as lovely a character as Mrs. Wheatcroft

The Conversion of Hamilton Wheeler

is unlovely. It is obvious that we have in the world every gradation of transition between the types of your two nieces, and while we should have a great majority like Mrs. Wheeler, it is a lamentable fact that we have a large majority who are more like Mrs. Wheatcroft. It is a vicious habit of body and mind that women have been developing for thousands of years, yet they could get out of it in a generation if they would only go at it right. Call it an oversexed state if you will. It has been largely due to making woman a sedentary animal and carrying it to excess. We bring them up as though we were producing fat goose livers for *pâté de foie gras*. No wonder their soft tissues react precociously and excessively, and that we reap what we sow in them as our daughters."

"If I had my way about it," interposed Dr. Austin, "I would begin a country-wide campaign of education for women. Teach them that all kinds of emotions, ecstasies, visions of spirits, ghosts, gods, devils, and the like, all intuitions, inspirations, and other flashes of a subconscious status, are not glimpses of the supernatural, but are distinctly symptoms of the subnormal, which can be seen in advanced states of development in insane asylums.

"When a woman observes herself advancing toward such states, she should know that she should take steps at once to get away from it, get out of doors, exercise, take cold baths, and have a good physician see to it that the diet and regimen is cor-

The Conversion of Hamilton Wheeler

rect, that the quality of the blood, the circulation, respiration, the heart, the digestion, and the avenues of elimination are all they should be. Never should she permit herself to drift into any delusional interpretations of them or to hallucinations.

"When people approach such a state, they and their families should know that they should be kept away from churches, spiritualists, theosophy, Vedanta, and other Hinduisms, and above all, from revivals. Pains should be taken to keep them from all emotionalism, depression, and morbid introspection.

"Sound inductive reasoning on well weighed evidence should be cultivated, while the imagination and the emotions should be correspondingly restrained and distrusted, and should never be drawn upon to compensate for lack of evidence on any point. Morbidly sustained meditations on post-mortem existences accomplish no good, since no real knowledge on the subject is available, and they do incalculable harm. The healthy mind does not dwell upon such topics, and should be diverted from them as quickly as possible following the grief of losing one who is near and dear."

"Bravo!" enthusiastically interjected Dr. McLean. "So much pains are taken by church-folk to magnify and perpetuate the grief of loss by death, medical men indeed experience much trouble in overcoming it and saving those who survive. I always believed and taught that mourning customs were pernicious, and

The Conversion of Hamilton Wheeler

I do believe the world would be happier, healthier, and economically better off if public funerals were dispensed with, and people would at once resume the normal habits of life after tenderly laying away their dead, away from public gaze. Funerals are a great and unhappy ordeal for the grief-stricken, and certainly are relics of past ages, most of the other customs of which we have long since discarded with contempt. Oh, if man only had the courage of his convictions and cared nothing for mass psychology.—Well, I must go. Good night.”

“Good night,” responded Dr. Austin, as he warmly clasped the hand of his friend.

The Conversion of Hamilton Wheeler

Chapter XII.

DR. AUSTIN made it a point, so far as possible, to make his calls on Hamilton in the evenings, for two reasons, first because Hamilton's school hours were over and secondly because he, himself, was through with his own busy day, divided between his office and his rounds of the city hospitals and the homes of such few patients as he visited. On these occasions he felt free to remain, after going over Hamilton's case in its developments since his last visit, and have a pleasant visit with his niece. The subject of their conversations had now drifted quite exclusively to Hamilton's case, and to that great mine of psychology and religion which had been opened up by his revival experience.

It was now half-past seven, Mrs. Wheeler, who was a methodical and painstaking housekeeper, had just finished washing the dinner dishes when the door bell rang, and Dr. Austin was most cordially received. After making his usual observation of the present status of Hamilton's case, the Doctor patted him on the back affectionately and gave him encouragement and congratulations on his devoted and intelligent carrying out of his instructions, and on the improvement he had made. Turning now to Mrs. Wheeler he remarked: "Now to resume our little talk on the mind.

"I wish I could tell you what you need to know

The Conversion of Hamilton Wheeler

direct, and without any preliminary data, yet without such preliminary knowledge on your part I will have to give you a sort of a lecture leading up to what I would have you know.

"The faculty called the attention which is a focus of consciousness on a particular object or subject, as a mental element, is practically incapable of partition. The higher the integrity of its unity, the more normal and perfect is its performance. Conversely, to the extent of its division or cleavage, and to the extent that it may become broken and dismembered, is it correspondingly functionally incapacitated. Distraction and confusion of the attention involves a corresponding clouding of the whole mental process. The attention, both objective and subjective, is the normal center of mental convergence and unification, and to the extent that one constituent element of a partitioned attention is strong, the other is correspondingly weak. When we speak of concentration of the mind as an intellectual requisite, we mean a unified and undivided attention. Holding the attention to one object or subject, is holding the focused conscious mind to it. All mental diversions and digressions are of serious import, for the reason that they divert from the original object or subject to the extent that they bestow the attention upon the object or subject of the digressions. Absentmindedness implies a misapplication of the attention.

"The maintenance of the mental focus which we term

The Conversion of Hamilton Wheeler

the attention depends upon the strength and physical capacity exhibited in sustained applications to single goals, which are always fatiguing. The result of fatigue is exhibited in loss of unity and of focusing capacity. The fatigue of the attention entails fatigue products just as much as muscular strain. Much evasion of reason entailing sustained deliberation, especially on problems at all abstruse, is due to weakness and unendurance for sustained attention. The stress of focus bears direct relation to the number of constituent representations. Thus the fuller and higher the consciousness, the greater the strain, and the less able is a weak individual to endure it. Conversely, the subnormal fugitive egoes are enabled to focus only when the representation is small, for the same reason."

"The attention may be occupied by either external or internal ideas, it may be attracted or directed by current sense impressions or memories of past experiences. All mental acts normally bring current sense impressions and memories of past impressions into joint associations, but if absolute unity prevails, but one object or subject of the attention is involved at any one time. If all the collective interacting constituent representations of the functional concert, the composite mental product, is limited to a single theme, the highest result is obtained. Singleness of the attention, and therefore of consciousness, is a virtue, and its division is a vice. The greatest vice, however, is that in which the attention is occasionally occupied by subconscious ideas, subnormally, which, owing to

The Conversion of Hamilton Wheeler

their weakness, never come into the higher resistances of full conscious associations with the stronger representations, wherein the degree of representation, in all conscious deliberations, depends upon and is consonant with the strength of their dynamic reaction force.

“If we deduce that the dynamic force of a sense perception is in direct ratio with the molecular disturbance of equilibrium involved in its original reception impress, we may deduce that the subsequent repetitions of its reactions will be in proportion to the original ratio, and thus that their representation in all subsequent collective mental functions will bear a definite relation to such intrinsic dynamic status, and maintain an order in attainment of such representation in competition with the relative dynamic forces of other representations in the full conscious mental concert.

“We do, however, find by observation, as exceptions to the laws just mentioned, that stronger representations of many mental associations in our composite mental processes may be inhibited by traumas, fatigue, and accidental and artificial abnormalities, and natural ones such as in dreams, when an abeyance of dominant representations gives place to weaker ones, some of which may never before have attained to occupation of the attention and consciousness, and never could in collaboration with the stronger representatives which participate in and dominate attention of full consciousness. I have already ex-

The Conversion of Hamilton Wheeler

plained to you how weak subconscious representations assert themselves, such as in planchette writing, without directly occupying the attention.

"The conscious mind, of many psychologists, or full consciousness, is the sum of that which occupies the attention. Whatever occupies an individual's attention, he is self-conscious of it as the subject of his thought. The 'conscious mind' is of necessity the dominant and prevailing subject of mental occupation. We have observed that a fundamental law of mental function is singleness of mental occupation, *i.e.*, one subject of the attention, and if conscious thought occupies its place at a unit time to the exclusion of others, in inverse ratio, and to the extent that the attention or consciousness is dominantly occupied with one subject or object of its occupation, others are correspondingly reduced to minor or subconscious values.

"Conversely, occasionally, elements or factors of the aggregate which we call the *mind*, which have been minor members of the total concert, become *majority* members. In other words, on occasions when the majority members are temporarily absent, the minority ones come to the surface, dominate consciousness, and occupy the attention, and thus the subconscious elements attain to the superconscious, wherein they attain the dominant role, and constitute a fugitive ego.

"Among mental elements which are usually in the

The Conversion of Hamilton Wheeler

subconscious class, may be mentioned, respectively, the forces of hereditary instinct, habits, addictions, automatism of action, memory, etc., which exercise continuous influence upon all of our conscious thoughts and acts, without *per se* dominating the attention, or becoming the subject of our thoughts.

"These are truly subconscious elements of the mental function in their normal relations. We are more or less governed in all our thoughts and actions by these factors, which do not rise to the surface or become impressed upon the attention to the extent of a consciousness of their existence. We may, however, by analytical introspection dissect out these elements and thus bring them to our cognition.

"When an individual becomes mentally unbalanced, a previously dormant latent instinct may, and not infrequently does, dominate and find expression, as an abnormal impelling impulse, passion, or fanaticism.

"When certain elements of the higher and fuller mental concert are absent or suspended, as in sleep, deliriums, etc., normally subconscious elements come to the surface, so to speak, and dominate a subconscious mind, or wholly constitute an incomplete and subconscious mentality. Memories which have for many years been dominated over and been subservient to stronger engrams, not infrequently come to the surface and occupy the attention, when the attention ceases to be occupied by the stronger impressions of former environmental attractions.

The Conversion of Hamilton Wheeler

"Occupation of a mind by *objects*, requiring the physical stress of sustained attention, is far more fatiguing than by *subjects* of independent thought. Thus spontaneous diversions of weak mentality and overwork change the objective to the subjective. Wandering minds and fugitive thoughts are subjective, rather than objective; yet sustained thought of abstract reasoning is just as fatiguing as objective mentality, equally prolonged.

"The terms conscious mind and subconscious mind, and the subjective mind and the objective mind, do not appeal to me as well founded scientifically. Primarily, they give them the tenor of *entities*, as much as descriptive characters. Secondly, the mental states are often *personified*. But another step then remains to *deify* them. Those pseudo-scientists who find satisfaction in characterizing themselves as New Thinkers and 'Christian Scientists,' deify the mental function in dubbing it 'Divine Mind,' and as one with an infinite mind which cannot be an animal mental function.

"There is no warranted occasion for expressing the minor mental elements as the *subconscious mind* when a fugitive ego is meant, and in fact the major elements dominating the attention do not find an equivalent compatible term as the *conscious mind*. A conscious mind should be universally the equivalent of a conscious person, which would imply a full concert of the interaction of all of the elements of full con-

The Conversion of Hamilton Wheeler

sciousness, and yet by the term subconscious mind is not necessarily meant a subconscious individual or personality, but one dominated by a fugitive ego.

"There is also no legitimate occasion to term a mind occupied with a subject a subjective mind, or one occupied with an object an objective mind. The tendency is here to throw the typical features upon the personified mind, rather than upon the type of its function, *i. e.*, the verb is preferable to the noun, and objective and subjective *mentality* would be far more correct and appropriate. Misleading terms are always to be avoided in scientific nomenclature.

"The occasional functional dominance of a subconscious group constituting a fugitive ego during periods when the full consciousness is not manifest, appears to be due to a temporary release from the normal inter-current stress incident to the interaction of the full mental concert. The greater the number of inter-reacting representations co-operating in any functional concert, the greater is the mutual interacting stress, and in all forms of reduction of the aggregate of such representations, the lower is the inter-current stress of their reaction.

"Sense impressions, so faint or low in dynamic force that they fail to dominate consciousness against the stress of a full concert of representations, easily dominate the attention when the stress is reduced by a sufficiently low representation. In the semi-conscious state of hypnotic and natural sleep and in delir-

The Conversion of Hamilton Wheeler

ium, the dominant consciousness is not the same as that of the waking state. Sense traumatism exerts a similar action on consciousness, suspending or inhibiting representations by tetanies or whatnot, thus producing a subconscious state. Amnesia is a state of subconsciousness, exhibiting a well defined absence of definite fractional representations of the mental concert.

"Weak sense impressions, which have never occupied the attention of a person, are unknown to that person however long they may have been carried at subconscious levels, and therefore are not so recognized at any later date when they arise to the dignity of occupation of the attention. Thus it is that whenever subconscious concepts thus first attain the attention, they are often interpreted as supernatural visions, inspirations, or supernatural communications, rather than memories.

"You will note in connection with what I am about to tell you, that unity is the essential fundamental character of the normal mind. There must be a unity of the several elements of consciousness, unity of the elemental factors of ideas and of thought, and another unity is involved in a necessary continuity of thought. All these are essential to normal mentality. Conversely, if we suffer a disintegration of disassociation of any of these unities, we suffer a corresponding abnormality.

"As I have already explained and illustrated to you,

The Conversion of Hamilton Wheeler

we have morbid states of consciousness which are but cleavage fractions of larger and whole ones which have been rent asunder, and separate expressions of the two or more cleavage products which destroy the unity and single personal identity and character of an individual. As we have observed, one conscious element may even communicate with the other, and thus the fully normal conscious self will regard its fugitive subconscious ego as some supernatural manifestation of a God, a disembodied Spirit, etc. Another form is mental dissociation, in which is inhibited a normal association and co-ordination of ideas. Instances of forcible impression of false perceptions and irrational ideas that are impossible of coherence and co-ordination with the person's everyday experience, and of adaptation to his own environment, are types. Here confusion of perceptions and incoherence of ideas mentally disqualify the victim. Yet another type of mental disarticulation is that of discontinuity of thought, as exhibited by desultoriness, and a substitution of fugitive and segregated, for a connected consecutive series of thoughts.

"I would emphasize the importance of your recognizing that the same laws that apply to matter in general, apply equally to the mind. The higher the degree of integration and integrity of its unification, the more normal it is, and conversely, the extent of abnormality always corresponds to its degree of disintegration. The reason of this is that the mind is noth-

The Conversion of Hamilton Wheeler

ing more or less than a functional product of the material tissues of the animal body, and, as I am convinced, its unity and typical characters are dependent upon and directly correspond to the existing integrity and density of the collective tissues which give it birth. I feel profoundly that not until the world recognizes these facts in both prevention and treatment of mental ailments, will morbid psychology and therapeutics attain to the perfection of other sciences."

"That is most interesting and illuminating," interposed Mrs. Wheeler. "I have read in magazines of double consciousness and plural personalities, but none of them that I have seen made a point directly of what you do—that the normal unity of the single personality of the individual is broken, dismembered, or segregated, although that is obviously the case. It seems most important, as you emphasize, that all these forms of abnormal mentality are likewise forms of broken unity."

"Yes," continued Dr. Austin, "but I must greatly elaborate it if you are to obtain a complete mental picture of the subject, and even go outside of cases directly connected with causative factors of strictly religious nature. Therefore please do not regard apparent diversions as actual digressions.

"There is a definite and typical mental state and personality which is characterized by the co-existence and influence of a super-sensitiveness (hyperesthesia) of the special senses, as hearing, vision, smell, taste,

The Conversion of Hamilton Wheeler

and feeling, and a general manifestation of super-impressionability, super-suggestibility, hyper-credulity, and super-plasticity; by emotional instability, unscrupulousness, moral weakness, cowardice, and by criminal predisposition or tendencies.

"This type also presents a physical status which approaches, in many respects and in more or less degree, one known as amnesia, in which, in some of its various phases, one or other groups of the elements of a full representation of consciousness are in temporary or permanent abeyance.

"Amnesia is producible by the shock of violent and injurious sense traumatisms in normal individuals, and by lesser factors in the hyperesthetic types, who experience kindred mental dissociations often from trivial or no apparent provocations. Amnesia is also producible artificially by hypnotism, to which the hyperesthetic individual is a predisposed subject. In revival, and all other types of crowd psychology, we find conditions of mental dissociations, akin to certain types of amnesia, in which the grouped elements of consciousness are so incomplete that a fugitive ego dominates the personality, in the absence of the association of a fuller representation.

"Writers on the subject comment that on occasions of subordination of the so-called conscious mind, the 'subconscious mind' which supplants it is of a greatly inferior character. That the conscious self is composed of the higher mental faculties and the subcon-

The Conversion of Hamilton Wheeler

scious self is composed of the inferior and ignoble ones. Such statements imply that the mind is divisible into two or more fixed sub-groups of superior and inferior standards. We, however, have no evidence to that effect. The superiority of the fuller group of representation is largely due to its greater *completeness*, whereas the inferiority of incomplete groups is due not only to incomplete representation, but as I have explained, owing to the lowered resistance of interaction of the inferior and incomplete representation, there are representations of sense impressions which are so weak that they cannot and may never come into the full representation of the full conscious group. This alone would account for the superior ethical standard, morality, and higher intelligence of the former.

"The myriads of weak perceptions which never reach the conscious attention, remain unmodified and unqualified by conscious deliberative association of ideas, and thus reappear, when at all, devoid of any deliberated value. The impressions gained by the recital of the words of religious songs, to which I have already directed your attention, are a type. They are sung thoughtlessly, without deliberation, yet the repetition of their utterance leaves their impress of sub-conscious values.

"It is quite generally understood that if a direct and definite statement be made concerning a person or object, it elicits conscious consideration if it occupies

The Conversion of Hamilton Wheeler

the attention. Yet it is often possible to insidiously influence a person without making a definite statement that fixes the attention or elicits conscious deliberation. Such impressions are weak, subconscious, and often indirect, yet by frequent repetition they produce a potent ultimate effect.

"The insidious process of 'queering' a person by insinuation, slighting, sneering, contemptuous disregard, inferential depreciation, innuendo, indignity, ignoring, and other negative acts, rather than positively and openly seeking to influence individuals or public opinion, is a good illustration of the sinister influence of subconscious levels of the mind. Individuals so influenced, thus gain subconsciously, and without a conscious consideration, fixed ideas and opinions which are of controlling potency, yet which if bluntly introduced in the form of an accusation, would at once be subjected to the test of a full conscious consideration wherein reason would be brought to bear.

"When a definite defense of an accused individual is made to stir to action a full deliberation, any preconceived subconscious opinion may be quickly swept away simply by the bringing to bear upon it the full conscious consideration. Often, however, the subconscious preconceptions cause persons to reject reason on religious subjects.

"The individual members of crowds do not give conscious consideration to the dynamic forces which are current, and which sway the crowd as a whole.

The Conversion of Hamilton Wheeler

The collective psychology of the crowd is composed of the subconscious levels of the individual members. We are not conscious of the contagion of crowd emotions, and yet we are swayed by them. We think we are the creators of our voluntary acts, when in reality we are unconsciously impelled by multitudinous insidious subconscious impulses. So-called freewill offerings at revivals and churches are, more often than we think, yieldings to impelling emotional sways.

"Whenever individuals are reduced to automatons by disciplinary repression of the normal individual supremacy, and the higher aggregate of consciousness is shunted down to subconscious levels, the manifestations of the fugitive subconscious ego only, prevail. One of the most prominent attributes to this incomplete consciousness is blindness to sequence. The victim neither anticipates the end results of contemplated future acts, nor apprehends those of present ones. They make good soldiers, for this attainment after prolonged training renders them oblivious of all personal danger. They fail to even apprehend the result or outcome of their concerted acts. Thus the first law of nature, that of self-preservation, is in abeyance, subordinated by subconscious automatonization.

"Probably there is no better illustration of the potency of influence of a multiplicity of repetition of impressions of ideas as subconscious groups, which are unrecognized by the conscious attention and unmodified by deliberation, than is portrayed in the religious

The Conversion of Hamilton Wheeler

training of young children. During years when they are too young to comprehend or mentally weigh theological doctrines, and in any event with the necessary data for such discrimination withheld from them and possibly also from their parents and teachers, they are brought under the constant influence of an atmosphere which embraces the fundamental and essential tenets of the religious doctrine. This is instilled into them without their consciousness of it, and thus is impressed quite entirely in subconscious groups, which are manifested only in the religious *faith* of the conscious attention of the individual.

"We Protestants see no wrong in this, so far as it is circumscribed within the limits of Protestantism, but who was not awakened to its fundamental wrong when Cardinal Newman proclaimed: 'Give me the children of England, and England shall be Roman Catholic'? If it is right for us as Protestants to introduce prayers and Bible readings in public schools, employ clergy with public funds for invocations in representative assemblages of State, as chaplains in State and Government institutions, the Army and Navy, we must concede the same to the Catholics. If our church property is to escape taxation, so must all Roman Catholic property. We must either separate Church and State now, or permit all these abuses without a word of protest until it is too late to save our country from Catholicism. What is fair for one is fair for all. The Protestants have already in our country taken the children of our public schools to make America Protest-

The Conversion of Hamilton Wheeler

ant. Now we must either discontinue all religious exercises in public affairs and institutions, or accord the same privilege to the Catholics. It will then be a competition to determine which religion can make the deepest subconscious impressions, instead of which can most powerfully appeal to the intellect. That will decide whether our future generations are to be Protestant or Catholic. It is to be hoped that the present safe balance may be maintained by going back to the policy of complete separation of Church and State of our National Constitution, or better yet, effacing all supernaturalism from all religions. Not until then will our republic be safe. Not until then will we be intellectually unbound.

"The possibilities of accomplishing great wrongs by continuous subconscious impressions upon children, who are thus brought up upon conceptions which go to them almost wholly as subconscious impressions, when they were too young to reason or possess the necessary data for a basis of discrimination, when data to the contrary is even suppressed, as it generally is with pupils of religion, yea even with the older students, have been well illustrated in Germany. The great bulk of the German soldiers of the present war have been subconsciously instilled with the glory of the national military program from early youth, in the public schools and every walk of life. It came as a matter of course, never as a subject of debate. If it had, it might have had a different outcome. A German boy no more questioned the advisability or the desirability of the

The Conversion of Hamilton Wheeler

program, or of the prerogative of the autocracy to make it, than a Catholic child questioned the policy of his church or the prerogative of the clergy. The devout duty to accept and perform, thus dispenses with all reason.

“When we read historical narration of all the bloodshed of religious wars, and of all the cruel barbarities, murders, and rapine, committed by all Christian factions against other factions, both Christian and non-Christian, because of a divergence of religious views, we think of the supreme selfishness of peoples who would be guilty of such crimes simply because of honest difference of opinion, and that it must be sincerity on the part of the masses, or they would not engage in mortal combat in behalf of their opinions. We recognize also the fanatical interest exhibited by each sect and faction in fighting for the ascendancy of their own creed and faction.

“All this is true enough, but what we neglect is recognition of the fact that in the psychology of each faction was included a wholesome or unwholesome fear of the religious hysteria and fanaticism, born of subconscious preconceptions, of the opponent factions, from which they would consider themselves safeguarded only in the event of the complete subjugation, despoilation, and weakening, of the other faction. The constant unscrupulous intrigue, subterfuge, and connivance for advantage, in time of peace as well as of war, by the cunning priestcraft of all factions, led

The Conversion of Hamilton Wheeler

them to continually distrust as well as fear each other. Each faction feared first for its own cherished religion in the event of conquest. No persecution was too brutal and cruel to apply to punish heresy in the subjugated by the ascendant faction. When religious hysteria and fanaticism are dead, and not till then, will man become a truly social and peaceful animal. Not until that time will he cease to feel constrained to lie, steal, murder, or commit any other crime, either aggressively or defensively, in behalf of a creed, a church, or at the instigation of what he believes to be the divine representative of his subconsciously conceived God or Savior. The more sincere, devout, and fanatical is he, the more dangerous a citizen of any community, for such a person, in the conviction that *the end justifies the means*, will stand at nothing in his obsession that he will be rewarded in a celestial world for any crime or sacrifice committed in this inferior and temporal abiding place. All this will be a thing of the past, a past which has been full of crime and bloodshed, whenever that future dawns which has been predicted by Dr. Charles W. Eliot of Harvard University, when religion will be purged of its supernatural element entirely. We probably shall never live to see that happy day, but we can still anticipate it for our successors on earth in the ages to be.

"The religion of the future, the religion of this world, minus the mysticism and supernatural elements of the outlived religions, will need as many Cooper Unions in each city, town, and hamlet, as they now

The Conversion of Hamilton Wheeler

have churches, and as many lecturers, who will be instructors as well as moral and ethical teachers and leaders, as they now have ministers of the Gospel. They will need young men's and young women's associations as much as they do now. They will include physical with mental culture, and practical with classical educational features, just as they do now, but they will be universal. No creed as a requisite, or heresy as a bar. Sunday, the day of respite from daily toil, will find libraries and all innocent amusements, as well as such lectures as those of the Cooper Union, open all day and evening, and not forty, but one hundred per cent of the populace of every community will avail itself according to its choice, of profitable instruction and enjoyable recreation, and will not have to be whipped in by legislative statute.

"The Divinity schools will evolve into schools of individual and international sociology, ethics, morals, hygienic living, sanitation, civil government, etc., and the existing clergy, forgetting their past cults, sects, and creeds, will be absorbed in the great work of the new religion of humanity that will be compatible with bodily and mental health and happiness, and with God's laws certainly, if there be any God back of the laws of nature, or if we call natural phenomena *God*. Socialism and anarchy, then unnecessary, will be swept away, as will also strikes and strikers, all of which are now born of ignorance, prejudice, misunderstandings, and lack of social attitude, and ethical knowledge and feeling on the part of both opposing elements.

The Conversion of Hamilton Wheeler

"No longer will ignorance of hygienic living and causes of physical and mental abnormalities be responsible for millions of persons blindly making of themselves physical and mental derelicts, as occurs today, and no longer will itinerant theologic jumping jacks go about the country winning fabulous fortunes for themselves by emotionally stampeding weak mentalities into otherwise empty pews and insane asylums.

"No longer will a large percent of the people become coincidentally hyperesthetics and anti-social beasts through ignorance of correct living, and when that day comes, I can assure you that economic strife between men will come to an end. When all are healthy minded we will not only have just laws, but universal education will cause all to so recognize and respect them as such. Even married couples will become so reconciled that the divorce problem will be thereby solved.

"People will be at last taught that our bodies, our families, our homes, our communities, our states, our nations, our world, are all worth while. None of them must be sacrificed in behalf of any post-mortem celestial world of which we know nothing authentic, and of which we can learn nothing other than by the illusions, hallucinations, and delusions of morbid emotions.

"International contentions, jealousies, hatreds, and wars, will disappear, and all men will be able to say with the father of American independence: 'The world is my country, and to do good my religion.'"

The Conversion of Hamilton Wheeler

Dr. Austin, always reserved and contained, had never as now, in the memory of Mrs. Wheeler, given expression to his personal views on strictly religious subjects. Gradually, however, his ideas on related and allied subjects had been imparted to his niece, until by collating the fragments of his isolated mentions and references, one could not be mistaken as to his general dissatisfaction with what he had come to regard as the religion of persons with whom he came in contact. On this occasion he appeared to be wound up, as it were. He was profoundly in earnest, and spoke with considerable depth of feeling as he proceeded to give expression to what had long occupied his thoughts. He continued: "I long for the time when man will become familiar with universal laws, natural or divine, which he will recognize are inflexible, are never changed or deviated from by any deity, through any appeals to caprice, through vacillations of fickle fancies, and which grant no special privileges or unequal opportunities, as in Tammany politics, but are laws which operate so automatically that everyone *must* reap exactly what he sows.

"I long for the time when man will expend as much time, energy, and money in learning the natural laws under which he lives, and how to conform to and adapt himself to his law-controlled environment as he now wastes on modern survivals of ancient religions. Such an adaptation is the greatest problem man has yet to solve. The solution will cover all problems of life.

The Conversion of Hamilton Wheeler

"I long for the time when such pernicious doctrines will be no longer taught, as that a Supreme Being first created, and then premeditated, preordained, and determined the future eventful destiny of the Universe, including the barbarities of all wars, crimes, vices, etc., thus leaving all human actors innocent instruments of one colossal divine tragedy, and even foretold by God to man through inspired Jewish prophets.

"I long for a true religion, which shall be free from a corrupt, vicious, and bloody history, one that will be health inspiring instead of disease producing, one that will be without deviation from that infinite and eternal natural law that regulates everything in and event of the universe, the penalty of the transgression from which there can be no escape, and in the enforcement of which there shall be no belief in fear or favor through the medium of heresy, creed, or priest.

"I long for the time to come when all religions will be purged of the vicious teachings that believers in a particular creed, god, savior, a theory or formula of salvation can safely transgress and evade, or be saved from the operation of this divine law, or be in any way shielded from the inevitable consequences of their acts. I recoil at the dogma that any one is less wicked or less deserving of the penalty involved in the natural operation of the law, by virtue of a belief in any deified savior, or that any indictment against a sinner will be quashed by prayer, praise, flattery, oratory, pe-

The Conversion of Hamilton Wheeler

titions, entreaties, personal solicitations, by priestly intercessions, mass celebrations, by emotional sprees, by vicarious or other atonements, by repentance, lamentations, penance or a pseudo-scientific mental attitude.

"Such teachings as these are what destroy religions as moral forces, and invite transgressions of natural laws, the operations of which are anticipated to be so easily annulled by the chosen few who subordinate themselves financially, mentally, and physically to the Church."

Dr. Austin looked thoughtfully at his niece for a few moments, then rising and picking up his hat, said he must do an errand on the way home. He kissed Mrs. Wheeler an affectionate good night, and was soon in his cabriolet on his way down-town.

The Conversion of Hamilton Wheeler

Chapter XIII.

ON THE last occasion of a call upon Dr. Austin by Dr. McLean, the subject of the conversation had been Hamilton Wheeler's interesting case and the underlying conditions, so the continuation of that theme was made the occasion of another discussion between these two physicians, by appointment, at Dr. Austin's office.

As soon as Dr. McLean arrived, and the two old friends were comfortably seated and the customary pleasantries had been exchanged Dr. McLean remarked: "I feel somewhat unsteady today, in fact I feel as though I might have been through the mill of a revival conversion myself, and were just now beginning to suffer the effects."

"I have never forgotten," remarked Dr. Austin, "that Dr. Féré, of Paris, in his 'Pathology of the Emotions' (262) stated: 'A violent emotion is capable of evoking, just like a traumatic shock or an acute illness, a drunken delirium in an individual subject to alcoholic intoxication.'

"The craving for alcoholic liquors following strong emotions is well exemplified in the prompt occupation, concurrent with the opening of the revival, of all the previously empty storerooms in the vicinity of the Tabernacle entrance by saloons, and the expressed intention of some of the proprietors to follow the evange-

The Conversion of Hamilton Wheeler

list about the country on account of the prosperity he brings to their business. It is readily conceived that any attraction of such crowds would bring many dry throats there, yet as you know this delirium is recognized by other authorities, as well as Féré, as developed by strong emotions from any cause. Moreover, pathologic emotions are morbid exaggerations of what normally are the preambles to every act, and thus rash acts in general may be expected to result from such morbid exaggerations.

"It is remarkable, when one stops to think of it, that alcohol has played so important a role in the history of all religions, and especially in our own Christian religion. For example, the miraculous creation of wine in abundance for the wedding feast by Christ Jesus, the excesses of the Agapae of the early Christians, the consecration of wine as the holy blood symbol of the holy communion, the free use of intoxicants by all the early priests and monks, by Luther, Calvin, and others, and the long reticence of the church organizations to condemn it, until our American medical profession conducted its campaign of education on the subject of the destructive effects of alcohol. All these imply a sanction on the part of the Church.

"Whenever emotional victims of revivals once find they can renew their ecstasies with alcohol or narcotic drugs, they are predisposed to both addiction and inebriety, which are relative to the neurosis thus attained.

The Conversion of Hamilton Wheeler

"With ecstasy, sensation is suspended or extinguished. Ecstatic visions, hallucinations, and convulsions, are but part of the morbid train of events, and incoordinate utterances of ecstasy constitute the characteristic sacred 'confusion of tongues.' Rapid and irregular pulse, twitchings, convulsions, and tetanic spasms, violent contortions, jerkings, shakings, jumping, shouting, and finally insanity, constitute the pavement of the downward road.

"Wherever one goes, the most loquacious, adventurous, and emotional individuals will be found as claimants for office in political, economic, and industrial organizations. They operate by bellicose methods, by threats, intimidations, coercions, and often resort to violence, to attain their supremacy. They appeal to the emotions and passions, never to reason. They depend upon multiple repetition of emphatic affirmation. They produce convictions, and subsequent emotional feelings, by emphasis and repetition of affirmation alone, never by argument. They have no tolerance for oppositional argument. All opposition is put down by the might or the violence of the emotional and fanatical element. They are not only demagogues, but parasites on society. They impose even more upon the labor classes, whom they line up and hold in subjection to tribute by coercion and violence, than upon the employers who also have to pay them tribute or fare worse by contending with framed-up strikes. The emotional basis and its causes are the necessary incitement to this state of affairs. Without it, it could not exist.

The Conversion of Hamilton Wheeler

"The alcoholic excesses of bygone days have played their part, and a great part, in the production of the physical basis of emotionalism, but now since our own medical profession has carried on its campaign of education, which has so clearly shown the destroying effects upon both body and mind, and employers are more and more universally demanding not only temperance, but total abstinence, on the part of all employees in positions of trust and responsibility, that element is being gradually but surely eliminated. Having thus rid society of this physical basis of emotionalism, but one thing remains to bring man into his own: the elimination of the sensorial causes. I say sensorial advisedly, for it is to the *senses*, not the *intellect*, to which religion appeals. I am sure you will bear me out that evangelistic religion so acts, and that it seeks, as the most essential part of its propaganda, to foster emotionalism through the senses at the expense of intellect."

While Dr. Austin was speaking, Dr. McLean took a book from one of the book cases of Dr. Austin's library, and turning over its pages, as he resumed his chair, he observed: "I have here a copy of 'The Pathology of Mind' by Dr. Henry Maudsley, the eminent English psychiatrist, who died a few years ago.

"In reference to one of the effects of religion in the causation of insanity, I will read from page 139 of this American reprint. Observe its significance: 'A belief which is the prohibition of intelligent inquiry

The Conversion of Hamilton Wheeler

and fatal to an independent human bearing will not help but hinder intellectual development, will not strengthen but weaken moral character. By holding notions which are not founded on reason and cannot be reasoned about, inasmuch as they are assumed to transcend or may actually contradict reason, as a part of the common stock of its belief, the mind goes counter to the very principles of its intellectual being, undermines its own foundations, proceeds with a fundamental inconsistency declaring itself in every phase of its growth. What wonder that with the way so prepared and made ready it accepts with ease, when illness comes, extravagant delusions that are utterly contrary to reason.' "

Dr. McLean paused, and turning over a few pages, he resumed: "Again on page 147 Dr. Maudsley wrote: 'Any sect which fosters habitual emotional excitement, or lends its authority to extraordinary displays thereof, will favour the production of instability of mind and so predispose to the easy overthrow of its balance'."

As he closed the book, Dr. McLean remarked: "I regret that he did not say anything about the ultra-violent evangelists of our day who actually produce sense traumatism, as well as emotion, and violate the reasoning function. No well-informed physician can honestly controvert Dr. Maudsley's statements which I just read to you. In our day he would have mentioned the traumatism of the organs of hearing arising from the evangelist's deafening shouting, thunderous

The Conversion of Hamilton Wheeler

and ear-splitting yelling, fatigue, exhaustion of vision and the attention, from following him in his wild and acrobatic gesticulations and feats of agility. The general obscurantism of mysticism and religion, with its mental bewilderments and distractions, which are now so well recognized as pathogenic factors, were not elucidated in Dr. Maudsley's time as they are now. The same might be said of the high degree of hysterical contagion emanating and passing from the evangelist to the crowd."

Dr. Austin fully endorsed all Dr. Maudsley had written and Dr. McLean's comments, then observed: "Another typical feature exhibited by the present evangelist, that has impressed me, was the attitude of a slave driver, and as exhibited, not only toward his auditors, but to all his cooperating force. Insolent rebukes, hostile criticisms, despotic orders, and withering intimidations, were hurled indiscriminately at both audience and helpers. That, however, is but a single one to be reckoned with the other factors that go to make up the morbid whole. His barroom vulgarity, sensual insinuations, rude jokes, and blasphemies, shock all refined sensibilities of those who have been brought up in homes of culture, regardless of religious teaching."*

"Speaking of barrooms," interjected Dr. McLean, "reminds me that I have often thought of the morbid procedure involved in sudden or revival conversions, which is closely allied to that of acute alcoholism, so much so that the priests of antiquity used alcoholic

*See Appendix D.

The Conversion of Hamilton Wheeler

drinks as well as preparations of narcotic herbs to promote their sacred ecstasies and visions. In the words of Professor Leuba: 'Blessed are the intoxicated, for to them the kingdom of spirits is revealed!'

"In both religious and alcoholic intoxications, the primary emotions give way to a sense of buoyancy, well being, of freedom from care, and some degree of exhilaration. These merge into a state of light-heartedness and happiness. Later, the subject becomes irritable, and the higher moral feelings are suspended. Modesty and shame disappear, the accelerated sexual-emotions dominate, and excesses follow."

Now walking over to a section of a bookcase that extended to every wall space in the room, Dr. Austin took out a small blue volume, and resuming his chair, interrogated Dr. McLean on Dr. Boris Sidis' work "The Psychology of Suggestion." "Do you recall the brave expression of his convictions by President Jordan of Leland Stanford, Jr. University a few years ago? Dr. Sidis reviews it on pages 359 and 360. It is worth repetition at this time when it becomes so applicable. Dr. Jordan is quoted: 'Whiskey, cocaine, and alcohol bring temporary insanity, and so does a revival of religion—one of those religious revivals in which men lose their reason and self-control. This is simply a form of drunkenness no more worthy of respect than the drunkenness that lies in the gutter.' Following this Dr. Sidis comments: 'Prof. Jordan was attacked on all sides by the small fry of the pulpits. But Prof. Jordan was, in

The Conversion of Hamilton Wheeler

fact, too mild in his expression. Religious revivalism is a social bane, it is far more dangerous to the life of society than drunkenness. As a sot, man falls below the brute; as a revivalist, he sinks lower than the sot.' ”

“Well,” remarked Dr. McLean, “that is both true and well expressed, but I wonder what Dr. Jordan thinks of Billy Sunday’s reported statement in substance that ‘when the consensus of the latest scholarship says one thing and the Bible says another, the latest scholarship can go to hell.’ What does Dr. Jordan think of Sunday’s reported expression of depreciation of ethics—that one can ‘starve to death and go to hell on high gear on this ethical stuff?’ Just think, we now, apparently have religion entirely separate from good works.”

Dr. Austin looked thoughtfully for a moment and then remarked: “It is rather difficult to compare the deleterious consequences of these so supposedly unlike factors, but I have no doubt that they are nearly equal as causes of insanity. Alcohol affects the body *primarily* and the mental function *secondarily*, whereas religion affects the mind directly, distracting and deranging it.

“I have long studied the pathogenic effect of what is now called religious obscurantism, a term which to my mind is inadequate to compass the group of factors that are supposed to be embraced under that caption. The mental derangement caused by obfuscation, bewilderment, and defeats of coherence and co-ordination, which is caused by mental baffling and chaotic

The Conversion of Hamilton Wheeler

literature, and which is insisted upon as mental food for the express purpose of mystifying, confounding, and confusing the mind, should not be an unexpected outcome. Yet if we, as a profession, do not have the courage to inform the public now, we will soon be the subjects of blame which will be more serious than any professional prestige possibly lost then by wholesale deflections to faith-healing cults, had we the courage to warn the public of it years ago."

Dr. McLean expressed his approbation of Dr. Austin's views, and added: "I regard sanity as a state of successful adaptation to and adaptability with environment, and not less so with *fact*. Divorce the basis of fact and the perception of things as they are, and you deliberately foster mental unbalance and insanity. Normality involves adaptation to the natural, while abnormality seeks and clings to the mysterious and supernatural. As soon as a man loses his bearings, his coordination becomes impossible and he is gone daft. It is not only man's duty to be true to knowledge, whatever it refutes, but it is necessary for his mental health. The beginning of all these unbalanced states is characterized by obsessions which are contrary to the obvious truths which they stifle. When false obsessions continue unabated progressive mental deterioration is inevitable. With falsification of our senses, the inevitable course of our reason is always dangerous. Uncontrolled imagination and love of illusion go hand in hand. Delusion is its ultimate goal. If you artificially induce religious intolerance, you will always have political,

The Conversion of Hamilton Wheeler

racial, and social intolerance to cope with. Civil strife and wars will result. Develop a fanatic in connection with, or in the name of religion, and you have an individual who is fanatical in every walk of life. Fanaticism is a degree of insanity.

"When we destroy that which is necessary to reason, we eliminate that which is necessary to make a reasonable fellow citizen or a good wife or husband. With reasonableness, anyone is dependable, without it he is impossible. A combination of a good disposition and unreasonableness in the same person is impossible. You can't keep a mass of people mentally degraded and expect of them intelligent decisions when economic and political problems come up for solution. Crazy theories will result from defective mental operations. There is but one right side to every question. When both sides are healthy minded, the problem is more than half solved in advance. Fairness most always comes from the capacity to consider on its own merits the viewpoint of the opponent. It requires reason to regard fairly the standpoint of another who entertains an opposite view on any subject.

"Foster supernaturalism in mode of thought, and you simultaneously foster obliviousness to the majesty of material fact. Sufficiently inculcate belief in the unreal, and you correspondingly destroy the individual's natural adaptability to the real. Teach that the tangible is the intangible, and you have abolished differentiation. Crush individual initiativeness of thought with relig-

The Conversion of Hamilton Wheeler

ious fear, and your victim will lack initiation in thought other than religious. Persecute honest individual opinion, and you will foster weakness of independent thought. Man must progress, even the religious; those who do not progress must become victims of the evolutionary law of the elimination of the unfit. The religion does not save.

"Have we not observed the gradual elimination from Europe of the fanatical Turk? What about the ethics of some European Christian nations who are his allies and partners in crime? Is it not now the essential duty of modern civilization to shatter some divine rights of despots in order to rescue ourselves from their deprivations?"

"When we consider how religion has fostered false perception and conception, emotionalism, hysteria, fanaticism, and eroticism, should we be surprised at its history of horrors, its frightful inquisitions, massacres, burnings, brutal murders, inhuman tortures, crusades, and wars? Must history continue to repeat itself before we wake up?"

"I hope not," remarked Dr. Austin, and he continued: "As I have expressed to Mrs. Wheeler, all the higher and nobler mental attainments are dependent upon what we call mental elaboration. Sustained and complex deliberations are necessary to mature judgment, and therefore to good thoughts and acts. Ethical and moral individuals of character and stamina are seldom found among emotional derelicts at any time, and

The Conversion of Hamilton Wheeler

moreover unduly exercising and exciting the emotions always increases the delinquency and does not make better citizens of them. Even if they are temporarily sustained by suggestion, whenever they are placed on their own responsibility their uncontrollable emotions may at any time get the better of them. Political and industrial disturbances may at any time carry them off their feet, resulting in criminal and vicious acts. But a step farther and they attain to the criminal insane stage.

"The very height of folly was the religious emotional stampede of the industrial town of Paterson, New Jersey, already noted for its emotional criminal outbursts. I expect to see that bear fruit in equally great industrial demonstrations.

"Some apologists may hold that one type of criminal is typically characterized by emotional deterioration. That is partially true, but it must not be forgotten that the criminal status is commonly the outcome of an earlier emotional overexertion, of fatigue, and also of overt and rash acts, as indulgence in vices and commissions of crime. Progressive deteriorations of the mind, as we all know, are characterized by mania in the earlier stages and by dementia in the later ones.

"The young multi-millionaire, who recently was face to face with hordes of distracted strikers in Colorado, is indeed misguided if he thinks that an investment in wholesale evangelical emotionalism will render the masses quiet, poised, humble, meek, docile, or obedient, or proof against future emotional agitation.

The Conversion of Hamilton Wheeler

"Teach people to trust and obey the emotions, and to overexercise the emotions, evangelically, and you have prepared and opened the way for that type of economic disturbance which is characterized by fanatical manifestations, and I need hardly add that such as these are accompanied with destruction of property and bloodshed. Crowd emotion is at the bottom of all riots.

"Emotionalism does not foster good citizenship, and suppression of deliberation and enfeeblement of the volition and moral restraint, do not promote legal responsibility and moral stamina. The psychology of the crowd is the psychology of the mob and the riot. If you ever witnessed a riot, with all its fanaticism, you would appreciate the truth of what I say.

"Blind faith in dogma is a fixed idea, an obsession supplanting a process of reason. A man who reasons is always a safe and sane citizen. This negatively supports Kant's dictum that 'the death of dogma is the birth of morals.' A reasonable man is generally a morally responsible one, but, as George Eliot has written: "If you feel no motive to common morality but a criminal bar in Heaven, you are decidedly a man for the police on earth to keep their eyes upon.'"

"Those are good ones," commented Dr. McLean, and continuing, he said: "Regarding the emotions, it has often occurred to me that a normal man distrusts his emotions and holds them in abeyance pending deliberation upon the relationships of his past experience.

The Conversion of Hamilton Wheeler

The strong man ordinarily has control over the emotions; weak men, women, and children are lacking in such control. The dire effect of evangelistic violence increases that lack of control most in those who exhibit the least margin of safety. Defective and delinquent children, who are most amenable to super-emotionalism, are already deficient in control of the emotions and thus are most prone to complete breakdowns of moral stamina.

"I feel sure the people of our country would never permit themselves to participate in revivals if they knew the terrible price the country has to pay in intellectual deterioration and in taxes for institutional custody and treatment of those who become temporarily or permanently unbalanced by these purposely induced and highly impassioned emotional excitements.

"It is poor solace, even, to be reminded that some of these superinduced cases are merely reproductions of old derangements, which perhaps have previously undergone treatment had been discharged, or were already predisposed and easy subjects. It only proves it to be a case of the superimposition of exciting causes upon predisposing ones, and that both are morbid factors which should be safeguarded. One might as well condone the intoxication by alcohol or the inebriation of narcotic drugs in those predisposed to them, yet conversely, we especially prohibit their sale to confirmed inebriates, to the feeble-minded, and to minors. The same should be the case with evangelical religion.

The Conversion of Hamilton Wheeler

"All hereditary and innate criminals are super-emotional, which explains in part why they are so simultaneously religious. The religion with them is not hypocrisy by any means. It is as natural to be both religious and criminal as it is to be emotional and to lack the restraint of their emotions. Sudden, violent, and convulsive conversions of such men more often than not further lessen their emotional control and restraint against all evil impulses. That is the logical explanation why such individuals so commonly go back to crime and vice after sobering up intervals with the Salvation Army and various missions of which Jerry McAuley's is a type."

"That is certainly the case with alcoholics," commented Dr. Austin. "They become super-emotional and unstable through alcoholic intoxication, and owing to that condition, they are especially prone to paroxysmal conversions to religion. When they are most shattered and broken down physically, the greater is the predisposition to convulsive conversion. Many alcoholics, even without an evangelical type of conversion, spontaneously become morbidly religious and read the Bible incessantly, yet keeping up with their 'bracers.' Periodical drunkards very commonly are devotedly religious during the sordid period of depression following sprees. Many finally brace up, take liquor cures, others without, get well in all stages.

"It must be obvious to everyone that the cure of these cases requires general building up, strengthening

The Conversion of Hamilton Wheeler

of the will and emotional control, cultivation of poise, etc. The latter they crave more than any one thing. That demand is what leads many to Christian Science. Temporary peace is often found in the complete culminating exhaustion after a religious convulsive conversion, but it is always transient, and worse emotionalism follows to be met in other ways. At certain periods—those of mental depression—prayers and good resolutions are profuse and fervid, but emotional control seldom if ever comes from that alone.

“Have you ever noticed,” observed Dr. McLean, “that occasionally reformed reprobates become evangelists of the most emotional order, and, not infrequently are preferably sought after by certain classes of ministers who are not particular about what lengths they go in their endeavors to refill the empty pews of their churches? There are several such evangelists about the country at this opportune time, when the emotions of patriotism and the depressions of war lend a helping hand. It is now their harvest time.

“He who now afflicts our city, comes heralded as a reformed reprobate, and unites all the characteristics of the emotional renegade, imparting his own unrestrained emotion to his crowd of auditors by sheer mental contagion. No stable balanced man could achieve such a success in this line as he, for he combines the unrestrained impulsive violence, the unmodulated voice, the agility, unbridled ferocity, and

The Conversion of Hamilton Wheeler

intemperate speech of his type. I see by the papers that evangelism as a vocation is now becoming popular for emotionalized, and otherwise down and out, sporting men. According to the newspapers, Billy Sunday sought it when incapacitated for the diamond, and now the prize-fighter ex-champion Bob Fitzsimmons makes his debut. Possibly the pugilist regards himself as especially well qualified to make good any threats of bodily harm to his opposers, which he may emulate Billy Sunday in making."

"Returning to the subject of the pathology of prolonged and intensive fixation of the attention on incoherent and incoordinate narrative," said Dr. Austin, "I have observed that there are individuals who will adhere to a literal interpretation of our version of the New Testament, and persevere in an endeavor to bring order out of its chaos, and to reconcile many irreconcilable incompatible jumbles of narrative in an effort to comprehend what they are told is the easiest to mentally compass of any book in existence (the Bible). They thus wrestle incessantly to solve such impossible problems as the attempt to reconcile the Jesus of Matthew 2:1, 6, 8, who was born in Bethlehem a year or more prior to the death of Herod, which was in the year 3 B. C., and the Jesus of Luke, 1:26, who was born at Nazareth at the time of the taking of the census by Quirinus, Governor of Syria, which was in the year 8 A. D. The former, the metaphysical *God*, becoming merged into the latter, the *man* Jesus, of the stem of David, who was the Jewish

The Conversion of Hamilton Wheeler

political Messiah of Luke. These individuals will meditate without rest over the mutually irreconcilable features of the aeon Jesus of the Gospel of John, as compared with the mentioned two of the synoptics, and will ponder over which of these was the one who was described as crucified on the cross according to the four Gospels, and which was hung on a tree according to the Epistle of Paul.* They try to follow Acts in attempts at reconciling them, but without avail. They become lost in their bewilderment, and defeated in their endeavors to reason out the unreasonable.

"One reads agast that the birth in Bethlehem of the divine infant, Jesus of Matthew, is heralded by the appearance of the star in the East, while the birth in Nazareth of the infant Messiah of Luke is announced by the angel's words to the shepherds. The first coming in fulfillment of sacred prophecy, the second as a political deliverer. The former was honored by visits of Magi, the latter by shepherds. The latter was born twelve years after the former, and later was merged with it into one. The Jesus of Matthew, the paternal grandson of Jacob, 28 generations removed in descent from David, is not differentiated from the Jesus of Luke, paternal grandson of Heli and 43 generations removed in descent from David. If it were not all the infallible word of God, one might lay it aside with contempt, but in its position, if any incongruities or incompatibilities are found, the trouble must be in the finder, never in the holy book.

*Galatians 3:13.

The Conversion of Hamilton Wheeler

"One Bible reader will be lost in bewilderment over the relationship between the several Johns, and another over the several Jameses of the New Testament. The mind is confused by the promiscuous and chaotic jumbles of John the Baptist, John the disciple, John the Elder, John the Divine, John, son of Zebedee, John of Ephesus, John of Asia Minor, John surnamed Mark, and just Johns. Again one seeks in vain to identify or distinguish James the Just, James, brother of Jesus, James brother of Jude, James the disciple, James son of Alphaeus, James son of Zebedee, James surnamed Boanerges, and many another unidentified James, which open the door for wild speculation without limit, but satisfy none. They begin and end a mystery. The mind of the sincere seeker after an intelligent narrative is left hopelessly adrift. Resort to Biblical Dictionaries avails nothing but theories and disputations.

"It is true that many weak minds would not note such incongruities, however conspicuous, even in a lifetime of daily reading. Others go to their pastors for light, and accept anything explaining them away. Others still, seek dictionaries, but only those who consult the *Encyclopedia Biblica* get any degree of satisfaction. Many finally save themselves by drifting into Freethought literature. It is the poor soul that accepts the Bible, as it stands, as the infallible word of God, and is dissatisfied with being put off by his pastor, when he has sufficient intelligence for it, who is baffled, confused, and perplexed at its ambiguities,

The Conversion of Hamilton Wheeler

and becomes unbalanced when he peevishly and assiduously adheres to the impossible task long enough. The acute and subtile mind of a highly impressionable, receptive, and unstable individual is most prone to become the victim of the mental distraction, of the involved obfuscation and obscurantism.

"The revival manner of recruiting the ranks of church congregations is an implied insult to every member of an evangelical church. It brands him or her as one of an organization which is driven to resort to tactics for its sustenance, that mentally deteriorates those whom it 'converts' and holds disciplined as members, by virtue of such incurred mental deterioration, and by the hypnotic influence exercised over them by their pastors, or their evangelistic hirelings.

"It would appear that the individuals constituting the revival harvest of the churches must be especially regarded as a group of persons with broken wills, enfeebled volition, prone to any and all types of emotional excesses, and worse than all, predisposed to manic-depressive insanity and correspondingly to commitment to madhouses."

"I have often thought of that," remarked Dr. McLean. "It certainly is not a compliment to one's intelligence to be registered as an evangelical church member.

"The mental surrender to the awe of mysticism, a capitulation with clouded mind to beliefs and obses-

The Conversion of Hamilton Wheeler

sions, which are insusceptible of mental grasp and comprehension, are the first steps toward the total discoordination of the unbalanced state, which is characterized by incoherence and loss of powers of discrimination, of orientation, and adaptation to the world about him.

"I have always lined up with the social against the unsocial, the law abiding as against the law breaking, and the moral as against the immoral classes, but I have never been able to bring myself to understand how a system with such a history as the Christian religion, with such unwholesome features and pathological influences and achievements, is permitted to masquerade as an institution of ethical culture in our otherwise highly civilized age. I am compelled to class it with the great war, as the child of political corruption, as a necessary prop to autocratic despotism, and to conclude that it is thus sustained by such despotisms.

"Religion, ever the strength of autocratic and despotic governments, is undoubtedly the greatest foe of republics. That which established and maintained the divine right of autocratic rulers and sustained them upon despotic thrones, always maintained the right to control allegiance of the ruled to the rulers, and thus was not only the real power behind thrones, but the prelate was the absolute dictator of royal command. The royal prerogative was always subject to the censorship and approval of the ecclesiastical despot behind it.

The Conversion of Hamilton Wheeler

"In monarchies, where the ruler was the mere puppet of the Church, the subjects were by the Church held in subjection, and in submission to impositions by the monarchs, that would not be tolerated in republics. Even in republics, however, the allegiance to church hierarchies is unfortunately often stronger than that to the government.

"The separation of Church and State in America, is rapidly breaking down, thanks to the political corruption which is gradually surrendering the liberty fought and bled for by our forefathers and guaranteed by our Constitution. Both Protestant and Catholic are now able to coerce weak and venal politicians, who are dependent upon their suffrage, into enacting laws which inflict upon the public, independent of their religious convictions, oppressive and puritanical blue laws at the instigation of one, and Catholic special privileges and unequal opportunities at the instigation of the other. The evasion of taxation upon already immense and yet growing values of church property interests, evasion of just shares of military duty by the clergy and even divinity students, and by the religiously convicted, thus devolving the burden of sustaining the country more wholly upon volunteers and non-shirkers, the pensioning of ecclesiastics with public funds, as Army, Navy, legislative hall, and institution chaplains, and of Catholic priests as teachers of Indian schools; the appropriation of public funds to denominational, charitable, indigent, and penal institutions, and workhouses, has become a national vice. Legisla-

The Conversion of Hamilton Wheeler

tive attempts to enforce church attendance by closing public libraries, and forbidding the most innocent amusements on Sunday, are fostering all kinds of mischief in clandestine vices and crimes, while failing in the object for which they are designed."

"Really," commented Dr. Austin, "good works are always welcome, and never have to be offered or supported in the name of religion to find loyal American endorsement. But when, on the contrary, a church organization comes forward proposing a statute, which is dependent upon favorable consideration by the politicians and pays the price in order to be able to count on the support of that group, one may be sure that no one else but that group or the church wants it. However, so many such bills are being continually offered our law-makers, that otherwise would be defeated, that one legislator agrees with another for the mutual support of each other's bills. That is why we are submerged with a myriad of undesired laws. The supposed vote control by the clergy is the bait to the politicians.

"Religious bodies are not less faulty than political ones. Denominational organizations, dominated as they are by the ultra-orthodox factions, are therefore quite universally more orthodox than the majority of their individual members would be if independent. The progressive is ever amenable to discipline or expulsion, never the reactionary. The minister is not free to progress.

The Conversion of Hamilton Wheeler

"In every organization, which, like that of the church, occupies itself with the role of preservation of precedents, traditions, doctrines, or policies, the executive offices and directorates are quite universally filled by the most reactionary elements, and in that capacity they are not only made eligible for office, but also empowered by an ironclad medieval constitution, with which they discipline the rank and file with a ruthless hand for all progressive tendencies. The psychological sequence of such conditions is manifested in a passive conformance to antiquated doctrines by a large majority of ministers, who otherwise would adapt themselves to the age and environment in which they live.

"On the brink, as it were, between the past, with all its ignorance and superstitions on the part of its public, and its venal, corrupt, dishonest, and immoral priesthood, on the one hand, and an enlightened future with a ministry for humanity, and of this world, instead of a dream of a celestial future one, on the other, stands the present-day Protestant minister, with a parental church organization on one side demanding of him the sustenance of the institutions, creeds, and practices, of the church of the bygone ages, and a congregation, as a part of a great democracy on the other side, which is subject to the impulses of modern development, mental, moral, physical, social, and ethical.

"What alternative has the church member but to de-

The Conversion of Hamilton Wheeler

sert the pews when the unprogressive church fails to keep abreast of modern progress. Perhaps the minister then has no other alternative than to resort to the revival to recruit his wasted congregation. Perhaps we are too hard on the individual minister and blame him for what should be relegated to the man higher up—the reactionary—comfortably seated and salaried, who is only too ready to begin heresy proceedings against him who has the courage of his honest convictions.

“Remember, just as individual morality and ethics are far superior to those of the group, the crowd, and the political body, the modern minister would be a thousand times a better minister of humanity if he was permanently divorced from the religious body politic. Individually, he would preach humanitarianism, and would not stoop to sustain wornout dogmatic doctrines which are based on Oriental imaginations, and falsehoods of half-civilized races of two thousand years ago.

“The revival is one of the products of group or political religion. A Ministers’ Association here stoops to what a majority of its members would not do, as individuals, in its propagation.”

“I often wonder,” said Dr. McLean, “if these ecclesiastical bodies will persist in their pernicious programs until the Church becomes a thing of public contempt, as well as a place of empty pews, and continue the revival pest in their vain and futile attempt to compensate the present decline, until they have

The Conversion of Hamilton Wheeler

nothing left to reform, or will they at once begin the great work of evolution into a great humanitarian agency, gradually purging itself of the supernatural and any other elements which are unfit and are too weak to stand on their own merits exclusively. Only time will tell."

"To continue my remarks," resumed Dr. Austin, "it is not unlike the case of the people who eat meat, but would not eat it if they had to slaughter the animals. The revivalist is the butcher who is willing, for adequate financial consideration, to do what the men who employ him would not individually stoop to. In some respects the revival method is, from the pastor's standpoint, the lazy preacher's and the anti-efficiency way. It professes to compensate for his own deficiencies, in supplying occupiers of his pews and contributors to his salary and other funds, by emotional stampedes of those who would not be attracted by the superior qualities of his sermons.

"With the revival relegated to bygone ages, to rest in the museums of the childhood of man, along with the Inquisition, Witchcraft, and general heresy persecutions, as implements of involuntary and compulsory ecclesiasticism, the one remaining coercive measure to follow them should be the economic pressures still operative, wherein the more fanatical churchmen give preferment, political, professional, and commercial, to their own kind, and secret religious ritualistic fraternities are supposed to exceed the churches

The Conversion of Hamilton Wheeler

in their practical applications. This pernicious practice places a premium upon religious creed and affiliation, and correspondingly discourages reward for separate personal qualities, ethical policies, justice, education, professional ability, and above all, unimpeded advancement.

"If ministers would expend as much time and energy in fostering and promoting the progression and advancement of man, individually and socially, as they have heretofore, in vain attempts to sustain the formulas, systems, and creeds of bygone half-civilized ages, and would abandon the health and sanity-destroying methods of such attempts and take their places among twentieth century humanity, they would, I believe, regain their lost prestige as factors of present-day civilization. The time has gone, however, when the male delinquent and the unfit in the struggle for survival may find a haven as parasites on society in the Protestant ministry, or when improvident indigents and mendicants can live monastically on endowments wrought from the public in exchange for salvational bribery.

"With the rise of universal education, the minister and priest have become less and less teachers of secular learning and more exclusively and typically expounders of religion. What surprise is there then that he is in panic, and desperate over the continued decline of religion. Personally, I do not believe there is any occasion for that, however. These men are

The Conversion of Hamilton Wheeler

misled by their ecclesiastical associations. Crowd psychology again. I believe they can regain their former vocations as secular teachers.

"I am convinced that there is a great, and as yet undeveloped, field for able and scholarly public speakers, who already, as ministers, have great edifices everywhere, which are available as social arenas and auditoriums, and also virgin fields before them for mass education in sociology, psychology, ethics, politics, civil government, etc., which are as yet exclusively subjects of higher education, but which would confer the greatest boon to all men and to the nation, if they would be brought creed-free to their door."

"Revivals, however, are not the only means of subordination of the will by religious influence," commented Dr. McLean. "We read in the newspapers from time to time of suits brought by children and near-relatives of recently deceased, praying the courts to set aside wills made under undue influences, bequeathing property to priests, ministers, and divers ecclesiastical institutions, which are of decidedly dubious character."

"I know of a recent case," remarked Dr. Austin, "in which a man slowly dying of Bright's disease, extending over several years, was influenced by a sister and her family, three years before his death, but at a time when his mind was markedly deteriorated by the disease, to make a will bequeathing a large fortune largely to them, at the expense of his wife, who re-

The Conversion of Hamilton Wheeler

nounced the will, and his brother. He had no children.

"This man, previously a Unitarian, was initiated into Christian Science by the parties, who never permitted him to get away from the spell of the influence, or their presence, until he sank into coma. Meanwhile, they kept all other relatives and friends away on the pretense that not being 'Scientists' they were unwelcome, and kept his illness a secret from his brother who lived in another city. His wife, a weak woman, was cleverly managed, and the will was kept secret from her by all concerned in its construction.

"In this case, the only persons admitted into the house were Christian Scientists, who made up the nurses, healers, etc. The son of the controlling sister, who was appointed the executor of the estate, devoted much of his time the last year of the patient's life to his uncle's control. Nothing was overlooked, two or three Christian Science periodicals were subscribed for and were fairly lived within by the slowly dying man. Even the bookkeepers and temporary manager of his business, in his absence, were converted to this 'Christian Science.' The espionage system and management was complete. There were no children in this case, so the sister's family controlled everything."

"What happened after the patient's death?" enquired Dr. McLean.

"The 'Scientist' sister's family proceeded to close in on the widow so inhumanly that in mere self-de-

The Conversion of Hamilton Wheeler

fense she had to renounce the will before the first year of her widowhood had expired. But, despite of it all, a great business fell into the hands of these land pirates, of which they soon got absolute control, and a receivership ended its career. I believe the case is still in the courts, more than ten years after the patient's death, and even the widow is now dead."

"That is very interesting," observed Dr. McLean, "but I know of a case in which a feeble-minded widow, worth about seventy-five thousand dollars at the time of her husband's death, was influenced to desert another church affiliation for the Christian Science church, to which she liberally contributed, by a sister who was well supported in the intrigue by her grown-up family. This woman was so closely kept in tow that every outside influence was barred.

"She was influenced to make a trust deed of practically all of her property for the period of her lifetime, to a nephew, a son of the sister who led in her control and to make him her executor after death. I need not dwell upon the legal status of such a thing. She has a brother and two children, but by winning over the oldest child, a daughter, to the plan, it was put through, at first secretly, and later in spite of her brother's knowledge and resistance.

"The end of this is not yet. We may naturally expect foul means to follow somewhere, but whether the fortune can be saved or criminal prosecutions can be made to compensate for the damage already

The Conversion of Hamilton Wheeler

done, remains to be seen. All this was accomplished by religious hypnotism."

"That is most interesting," commented Dr. Austin. "What a book it would make if one could collate the cases occurring in our country, for a single month, in which religion in one form or other is used as a device to separate people from their money."

Dr. McLean arose while Dr. Austin was still speaking, and as soon as he finished, remarking the lateness of the hour, bade his friend good-night. As Dr. Austin grasped Dr. McLean's hand heartily, he thanked him most sincerely for his very kind attention, consideration, and comments, which helped to elucidate the case. Dr. McLean then hurriedly took his departure.

The Conversion of Hamilton Wheeler

Chapter XIV.

THANKS to the incessant painstaking application of the most advanced medical knowledge of neurotic and mental disease to every phase of Hamilton's case by his devoted uncle Austin, the young man had been enabled to complete his academic school course simultaneously with a carefully worked out and carried out course of treatment which had wrought a general physical state that was far superior to that which found Hamilton susceptible to revival propaganda. The day had arrived when Hamilton was to graduate, and Dr. Austin had called at the Wheeler home to escort Mrs. Wheeler to the school to witness the celebration of the happy event. It was indeed a joyous occasion. It was the eventual culmination of what appeared a few weeks ago to be impossible. To all who knew what had been accomplished in a medical way, and not the least among them was Mrs. Wheeler, Dr. Austin was a hero, though he modestly protested that Dr. McLean was also guilty as a participant in the great achievement. Dr. Austin, elated and happy, had arrived early. He was so jubilant that he had left his office an hour earlier than necessary, and now had to wait at the Wheeler home until time to go for the Commencement exercises, but he enjoyed the conversation with his niece while waiting.

The Conversion of Hamilton Wheeler

"Martha Wheatcroft was here yesterday afternoon," said Mrs. Wheeler to Dr. Austin.

"Well," responded the Doctor, "what is up now?"

"She misses John a good deal," said Mrs. Wheeler. "I think she would be very glad to drop her suit and take him back. She has not found herself as popular with other men with honorable intentions as she had anticipated. In fact, she has already been taken by two or three men with whom she has taken up, to be a woman of loose morals, which disgusted her greatly, since she regards herself as once more in the matrimonial market.

"One of these men, it seems, received a tip from that fellow with whom she had a flirtation last summer, when she went down to Sea Bright alone. It shows that he was not fascinated with any particular charms, for he, too, must have identified her as a light-headed butterfly that he might toy with and drop at his pleasure. Now she is morose and ultra-religious. Her self-pity knows no bounds, and her self-love is as strong as ever."

"Ah, I expected as much," ejaculated Dr. Austin, "her egoism is painful. Does she think as much as ever about the salvation of her soul? I thought a while ago if she kept on as she was going it last summer, it would have to be a case of salvage instead of salvation. But she can't help it, the apparently contradictory states are not what they appear. Her love of pleasure on earth and her eternal anxiety for the

The Conversion of Hamilton Wheeler

perpetuation of her precious soul in a celestial paradise are but excessive manifestations of that same self-love. If the men were like her, few would be sacrificing their all for their country. I have always felt sorry for John, to have been the slave to her wants that he has. He never received the least consideration from her, and with all he did for her she abused him continually for not doing more. Her absence certainly must be a relief to him."

"It is just beginning to dawn on her what she has lost," observed Mrs. Wheeler. "Heretofore when she was away, John looked after everything in her absence. The care of her own property and affairs always devolved upon him. When she sued for divorce she took over everything into her own hands, and now she is paying lawyers, agents, and several laborers to do what John did when she, all the time, was giving him credit for doing nothing at all."

"I met John the other day," remarked the Doctor, "I never saw him look better. He looks ten years younger. I asked him if he was lonesome, and he laughed at my bad guess. I told him I expected to hear that they had come together again, but he made no comment. If he ever gives in, it will be on the children's account, not her's. He is getting weaned away from her every day, and enjoying the change—the release."

Dr. Austin now admitted to Mrs. Wheeler, for the first time, how bad Hamilton's case was directly after

The Conversion of Hamilton Wheeler

the third attendance at the revival, and that under ordinary circumstances he would have continued through life with a broken will, emotional and unstable, if not unbalanced. Had he become unbalanced beyond a certain stage or degree, they would simply have had to place him quietly in a private sanitarium, where thousands upon thousands of the American public, who are financially able to pay for it, are wasting away their lives in luxurious custody, while hundreds of thousands are kept by funds derived from public taxation.

Dr. Austin explained to Mrs. Wheeler that notwithstanding his own growing hostility to the emotional harm that the evangelical churches are doing, he had viewed with complete indifference Hamilton's bringing up as a low church Episcopalian. He did not regard his concepts of the Christian religion as harmful, and as a physician he saw no other reason for seeking to mold any particular religious belief. He always said that he never asked a man's views on politics or religion and never considered them in estimating his ethics or his morals. If he was a good example of American citizenship, he was the best the world afforded.

Events had, however, so shaped themselves that Hamilton must now be relieved of some obsession and credulity which unbalanced his reason. Nothing less than a course of instruction which would correct many misconceptions, would avail to re-establish a degree of

The Conversion of Hamilton Wheeler

independence of consciousness. First of all, he must be taught that emotional feeling is not to be interpreted as a sense of spiritual force, the Holy Ghost, of Christ, or of God. It is not a thing to be cultivated, but to be shunned. It is not to be permitted to run wild or to riot, but to be disciplined and controlled. The imagination, also, must be brought under complete restraint, and differentiated strictly from logical and constructive thought.

Dr. Austin went on to explain that inasmuch as Hamilton had had such an unfortunate experience prior to getting into college, where among other things he would acquire a course of higher psychology, he now felt it incumbent upon him to advance to him a little of such learning, simply to dispel some erroneous impressions of his childhood, which had now been seized upon by his religious teachers to frame a false basis of mental perception and comprehension.

"Modern psychology," observed Dr. Austin, "is doing a great work in giving the young of our country a true concept of the human mind. It brings the normal student to view the mind as a physical function, as a *natural product*, and not as a *supernatural entity*, and also the imagination as something to be curbed. Many people confuse imagination with constructive thought. Almost daily we read of the work of great inventors, the fictions of great novelists, etc., as products of the imagination. I have even heard a preacher praise the imagination as the ideal mental faculty to

The Conversion of Hamilton Wheeler

be cultivated and augmented, never mentioning that the uncontrolled and delirious imaginations are the bane of the world, that inventions are usually the culminations of prolonged-persisting experimentations, that successful authors are architects and build fictions as men build houses, following a plot as builders follow plans which are previously laboriously worked out.

"I never met but one 'Christian Scientist,' who pretended to know much of anything physiological, pathological, or any modern general psychology of the higher order. This man I conversed with on the subject for several hours, while on a railroad journey. He told me he had been all through the best works on the subject and in the end with disgust turned to Christian Science, which he found to be the first and only system of learning that satisfied him. After listening to his story with respect, I asked him what works he regarded most highly among those he reviewed prior to taking up his final and satisfactory work of Mrs. Eddy's.

"He named over several, not one of which was a work of a recognized psychologist. All were of the spiritual and mystical sort. I asked him what was the best of these books, in his estimation, and he answered 'Cosmic Consciousness by Bucke.' We do not want Hamilton to get such ideas of psychology. I regard an adequate knowledge of collegiate psychology as a safeguard against false concepts, not only of mind, but

The Conversion of Hamilton Wheeler

of the emotions, and many false colorings given to them in way of divination, spiritualization, etc. If this revival had not occurred before Hamilton was in his junior year in Columbia or Harvard, this result would not have been obtained."

"You are an evolutionist, Uncle, are you not?" interrogated Mrs. Wheeler. "I think you told me quite a while ago that all scientific and educated men are evolutionists nowadays."

"Yes, my dear," answered Dr. Austin, "your recollection is perfectly correct."

"Now, as I understand it, continued Mrs. Wheeler, "the law of evolution accounts for the present existence and state of development of this world, as of the entire universe, by the application of the law of Natural Selection, by virtue of which the survival value of anything is one of fitness, while conversely it operates by the elimination of the unfit."

"Exactly so," responded Dr. Austin. "Professor Huxley most aptly and tersely characterized it as the law of the survival of the fittest."

"That being the case," interrogated Mrs. Wheeler, "is it not permissible and fair to conclude on that basis that Christianity, which has survived for about two thousand years, has survived because of its fitness? Would it not under this law have been long ago eliminated if unfit?"

"My dear Helen," interjected Dr. Austin, "some preacher has been talking to you, or some one else

The Conversion of Hamilton Wheeler

has been giving you second-hand their stereotyped argument. It sounds very well to one who is ignorant of the subject, but when one considers that the law of evolution is one of *Natural* Selection, and the survival of religions is one of *Artificial* Selection, it at once falls to the ground.

"I have pointed out to you that religions act on the human subject pathologically, not normally, which alone shows that they are not products of *Natural* Selection, but I have stated that they have been sustained by *Artificial* Selection. Many things have survived in this manner, such as diseases, vices, crime, etc., and certainly you do not believe that Brahmanism, Buddhism, and Mohemmedanism, have survived because of their fitness, do you?

"The history of Christianity tells us only too plainly the manner of operation of the artificial selection which has perpetuated it to our otherwise civilized age. Of course, entirely at first, and more or less in all ages, it has obtained converts and church accessions in the same abnormal manner that the various sects are doing it now. However, from the time that Constantine utilized it for political aggrandizement and made it the State religion of Rome, it has been sustained by the wholesale torture, murder, burnings, and massacres of unbelievers, and by the most severe penalties, even for the slightest heresies. The Spanish Inquisition, which began in 1478, continued until Napoleon stopped it a little over a century ago. The victims of the tortures and murders were numbered in the millions,

The Conversion of Hamilton Wheeler

while millions more were sacrificed in the religious wars from Constantine's time to date.

"It is true that the Christians were generally in the ascendancy, they were the prepared and the aggressors, by virtue of which they were generally the conquerors of the unbelievers, heretics, and non-conformists, but it was ever a case of might against right, of ignorance, superstition, fanaticism, subconscious prejudice and intolerance against knowledge and reason, of the abnormal against the normal, and therefore of a defeat of natural by artificial selection, wherein the learned, the wise, and the noblest of men and women were sacrificed by the ignorant, the unintelligent, and the ignoble."

"Oh, Uncle! Why haven't I thought of that before?" impatiently ejaculated Mrs. Wheeler. "I am not ignorant of history, I know it only too well, but I did not think of it when the argument I repeated to you was presented to me. Certainly anyone who is acquainted with history since the beginning of the Christian era, must admit the truth of your compelling answer to it. I see it has truly been a case of defeat of Natural Selection by an artificial one. I well know how science and intellectual development have been retarded and almost throttled by religious bigots.

"I cannot, however, get away from the feeling that the unbelievers of all times have been a class of people who were uninterested in reunions of relatives and friends after the painful separation of death. I think

The Conversion of Hamilton Wheeler

that such a hope is natural and is one that is imperative with us."

"You are both wrong and right in that," responded Dr. Austin. "You are wrong in thinking a negative position implies an absence of either desire or hope. In fact the wish is father of the thought in us all, and no less so in the most scientific man than in a woman or child. The only difference is, the former merely hopes, while the latter insists it must be so and will have it so. You must remember also that self-preservation is the first law of nature, and we have also an egoistic or selfish desire that we be eternally perpetuated. In some people, this becomes an absorbing passion, but you will note that they are not the self-sacrificing persons in the affairs of this world. The all absorbing passion for immortality that possesses some individuals is derived from the same physical basis which makes them otherwise innately religious. Even the lowest criminals are passionately jealous of the immortality of their souls or personalities.

"You must remember that all modern physicians, regardless of their religious and church affiliations, as soon as they are brought into professional relations with mental derangements, at once forget all about their religious beliefs and treat the mind as the physical functional product of their patients. If we didn't, we would not accomplish therapeutic results. We professionally recognize that we must maintain normal animal life and the physical functional activities to

The Conversion of Hamilton Wheeler

maintain the mental function. This implies that when the body ceases to functionate, the functional product—the mind, also ceases to exist regardless of all our most fervid aspirations and ambitions to the contrary. If belief would change the result, we would all very quickly believe it with all our might.*

“You will probably sooner or later ask the question: Why mankind has not long since dispelled unworthy and untrue concepts which were dependent upon artificial selection for their maintenance, and why man has not progressed in the better understanding of the life he is living and the environment upon which he is dependent. That question was answered centuries ago by that subtile English philosopher Francis Bacon. Bacon wrote:

“‘The human understanding is no dry light, but receives an infusion from the will and affections, whence proceed sciences which may be called ‘sciences as one would.’ For what a man had rather were true he more readily believes. Therefore he rejects difficult things from impatience of research; sober things, because they narrow hope; the deeper things of nature, from superstition; the light of experience from arrogance and pride, lest his mind should seem to be occupied with things mean and transitory; things not commonly believed, out of deference to the opinion of the vulgar. Numberless, in short, are the ways, and sometimes imperceptible, in which the affections colour and infect the understanding.’”

The Conversion of Hamilton Wheeler

"Isn't that splendid?" exclaimed Mrs. Wheeler. "Certainly he penetrated the innermost recesses of men's minds, and excavated the factors that move them. How few modern men are so deep as he."

"I have in mind a modern psychologist," rejoined Dr. Austin, "who has given us something that well supplements Bacon's analytical picture. Dr. E. W. Scripture, in his *New Psychology*, contributes something like this:

"Our passions, our prejudices, and the dominant opinion of the day are abundant sources of dangerous illusion, by exaggerating the probabilities in their own favour, and in depreciating the contrary probabilities. The vivid impression which we receive from present events, and which causes us scarcely to remark the contrary facts observed by others, is one of the principal causes of error against which we cannot be too much on our guard. Habit and sympathy determine to a great extent our beliefs, and, we may add, our statements concerning our observations.'"

"That is good," commented Mrs. Wheeler. "Certainly Dr. Scripture is awake to the possibilities of erroneous beliefs, and to the illusions born of misinterpretations of our observations. How very *à propos* is his name in such a connection.

"I am ready to go to the school any time now, Uncle," observed Mrs. Wheeler, "and I anticipate that if we expect to get seats, we had better start pretty soon."

"Very well, my dear," rejoined Dr. Austin, "I have

The Conversion of Hamilton Wheeler

been ready all this hour I have been boring you with religion, psychology, and their critics."

"I beg you not to talk that way," responded Mrs. Wheeler, "you know very well, Uncle, that I have been intensely interested in the subjects of our conversations, or rather your lectures. I am not a bit shocked now that I have taken time to think it over, and I would like to see the establishment of the new religion predicted by Dr. Eliot. I really am convinced that the world will be better and happier whenever that day dawns when religion shall be purged of all supernaturalism."

Thus they conversed until they stepped into Dr. Austin's cabriolet, and rapidly covered the short distance over to the school.

Now, after five weeks have elapsed since the last fateful revival experience, we find Hamilton, successful with his examinations, and graduating with his class. All these weeks Mrs. Wheeler had spent as so many months of anxious moments. Dr. Austin had devoted himself to Hamilton as a dominant occupation, even denying his time to other patients who would have gladly paid him well for it, in order to see Hamilton daily. Not a manifestation was ignored, nor was any derangement permitted to go unadjusted, but a most delicate adjustment of every phase of the case was made as indicated.

A most perfect regimen of cold baths, brisk rub-downs, gymnastics, etc., to harden the tissues, medi-

The Conversion of Hamilton Wheeler

cines to build up and clear up the blood, breathing exercises to improve general oxygenation, combined with the special daily adjustments, were rewarded with success.

Dr. Austin took every precaution to guard Hamilton against every possible emotion, exaltation, and depression during the critical period of his recovery, but despite his mother's usual alertness, Hamilton was caught reading the newspaper account of the suicide of Mr. Edward Stone of 341 W. 14th St., which was committed on May 15th, on his return from the revival. The effect on Hamilton was soon counteracted by Dr. Austin by a vigorous disciplinary talk.

The Hunts had learned through some mysterious channel of Hamilton's conversion, and Mrs. Hunt and Eleanor, being as is characteristic of their sex, religiously disposed, were quite enthusiastic over what they believed to be a strong moral assertion of developing manhood. Mr. Hunt, however, did not see it that way. Being an astute business man of long experience, who had brushed up against the world during a career of ascent from a very modest beginning in life, having been a close student of human nature, observing many failures of emotionally unfit men, he looked somewhat dubiously upon Hamilton's experience.

He had intending finding for himself an excuse for a call at the Wheeler home at an opportune time when he might have occasion to observe Hamilton closely, or

The Conversion of Hamilton Wheeler

perchance invite the Wheelers to spend a Sunday with them at their Long Island country place, but the season was so late, and the weather so cold or otherwise inclement, that procrastination served to defer it until the Hunts received an invitation containing Hamilton's card to attend the graduation exercises of his class.

Mr. Hunt now made it his foremost duty to attend, and at the close hastened to Hamilton to congratulate him. When he beheld the handsome rosy-faced boy, a picture of rugged health, he enthusiastically held his hand until he could join it to Eleanor's, then turned to pay his compliments to Mrs. Wheeler.

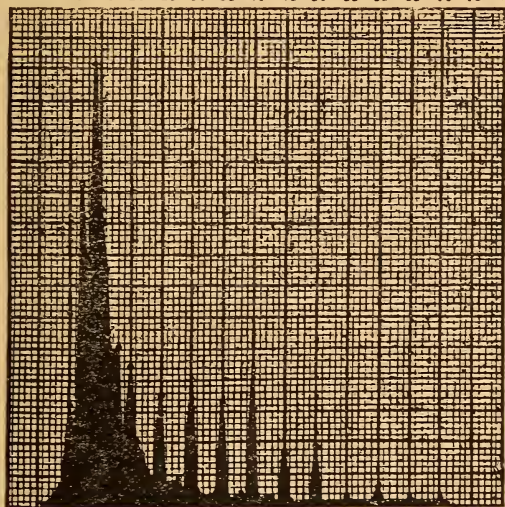
THE END.

The Conversion of Hamilton Wheeler

APPENDIX A

Church accessions during the past year (1910 or 1911) by confession or confirmation according to ages.

0 5 10 15 20 25 30 35 40 45 50 55 60 65 70 75 80



0 5 10 15 20 25 30 35 40 45 50 55 60 65 70 75 80
Ages at which received

The above enlarged diagram is taken from page 207 of the book entitled "Making Religion Efficient," edited by Clarence A. Barbour, D.D., Y. M. C. A. Press, 1912. Appearing as one of the survey charts of the Men and Religion Forward Movement.

The solid black area represents the accessions correspondingly as it extends from left to right to represent the ages at which persons were received, and from bottom to top to represent the numbers received. It is to be noted that this chart shows only those who were actually taken into church membership, but it is to be observed that it also shows the great preponderance in numbers just prior to the age of 15, which is a fair average of both sexes, for the age of puberty.

The Conversion of Hamilton Wheeler

This is explained by Prof. Coe ("Spiritual Life", page 48): "Churches that lay less stress upon the inner experience and more upon religious nurture place confirmation or a first communion at about the same point in respect to age."

Professor George A. Coe, in this book, "The Spiritual Life," New York, 1900, undertook to set forth the ages at which the maximum number of religious conversions, awakenings, as he calls them, occurred. He summarizes: (p. 42) "It is noticeable that there are three well-marked periods of awakening, namely at 12 and 13, 16 and 17, and 20. Only 10 per cent of all the awakenings occurred under the age of 12 years, while fifty per cent occurred at these maximum periods.

. . . (p. 44) Only thirteen per cent were converted under 12, and only sixteen per cent after 20 . . . (p. 45) If, now this average age of greatest religious awakening be compared with the age of accession to puberty, the conclusion will be sufficiently convincing that the mental upturning that accompanies the physical transformation is peculiarly favorable to a life decision in the matter of religion.

(p. 46) "The curve which might be drawn to represent these proportions would give a premonition of itself at 13 (the first period of adolescent awakening), start in again at 17 (the second such period) reach a decided maximum at 20 (the third period), and then rapidly fall away.

"All of this goes to show that religious tendencies are a most important feature of general adolescent development. When the approaching change first heralds itself the religious consciousness also tends to awaken. Again, when the bodily life is in most rapid transition the religious instincts likewise come into a new and greater life."

APPENDIX B.

Professor Emil Kraepelin of the University of Munich, in his "Clinical Psychiatry," 3rd English from 2nd German Edition, revised and edited by Dr. Thomas Johnstone, denominates what the theologians term "conviction of sin" as "delusions of sin." (pp. 5 and 142). Of the more serious form of mental disease, Dr. Kraepelin writes (p. 6):

"We give the name of *melancholia* to this condition, in which we see the gradual development of a state of apprehensive depression, associated with more or less fully-developed delusions. The most common of these are ideas of sin, which

The Conversion of Hamilton Wheeler

generally have a religious colouring. Such are the ideas of having fallen away from God and being forsaken, or of being possessed by the devil . . . (p. 7) The resemblance to anxiety in a sane person is all the greater because the depression has followed a painful external cause. But we can easily see that the severity, and more especially the duration, of the emotional depression have gone beyond the limits of what is normal."

The relation of the critical periods of life to the delusions of sin, is thus interpreted by Dr. Johnstone: "Kraepelin separated from maniacal-depressive insanity the depression of the involutional epoch. This state of depression, characterized by an anxious affective state and ideas of sin and unworthiness, he described as melancholia, as distinct from the depressed phases of maniacal-depressive insanity." (p. 349).

APPENDIX C

The material physical status of all mental and emotional attributes, is substantiated by the obvious and well accredited fact that all mental and emotional abnormalities are characterized by well recognized physical and chemical changes, together with their typical manifestations, of which every well informed physician is cognizant. In proof of the unquestionable abnormality of the functional disturbances within the limits of sanity, or to put it negatively: without the borderline of those of well defined insanity, we may mention first in frequency, that attacks of hysterical excitement from any cause are accompanied or followed by polyuria, corresponding to the profundity of the attacks. Tensional states, anxiety, worry, and allied conditions are alike accompanied. Particularly suspense and urgent solicitude, such as one of vital character, and more than ever when coupled with fear. In these cases there is great fall of specific gravity of the urine. Less frequently oliguria, and even anuria may occur.

In cases of hyperesthesia, and particularly of neurasthenia, the urine is occasionally observed to exhibit high specific gravity, low volume, excess of uric acid in relation to urea, of earthy phosphates to alkali phosphates, an increase of chlorides, and lowering of the oxidation coefficient, indicating more or less degree of acidosis and anoxemia by Hamberger's law. In severe cases of neurasthenia more or less diminution of urea, and in most cases, a great excess of uric acid, is observed. A marked depression in the activity of nitrogenous

The Conversion of Hamilton Wheeler

oxidation is indicated by the relation born by the total nitrogen of the urine.

The intimate relation born by maniacal-depressive states to metabolism is illustrated by the accompanying fluctuations in body weight of these cases. During the period of super-excitement the weight falls, sometimes several pounds, and during periods of calm and poise it may make very pronounced gains, even 25 kilogrammes (about 12 lbs.)

In cases of pronounced melancholia the metabolism may become so depressed that gain in weight is induced simply by general stagnation of vital processes, including both combustion and elimination.

The dependence of the mental function upon the physiological processes is perhaps most intimately exemplified by the activity of the circulation as propelled by the heart. In cases where the other factors are good and the heart defective, the mentality rises and falls directly with the heart's action. Also when other factors than the thyroid gland are normal, we see idiocy is exhibited inversely as the activity of the gland is arrested, and lucidity is produced corresponding to the artificial supply of the elements of these glands.

APPENDIX D.

Sanford H. Cobb, in his "Rise of Religious Liberty in America" (New York 1902, pp. 271-274), thus describes the troubles and dissensions in the early New England churches produced by James Davenport, the predecessor of the present day violent evangelists:

"So the churches had rest for a while until the rise of that convulsion, known as the Great Awakening. This movement, the sequel of Whitefield's preaching tours, besides its effects of much spiritual quickening, was attended by many most deplorable features. The reaction from the conservatism of the past had resulted in many cases in the wildest extravagances of action and speech. Many of the promoters of the movement were unbridled in their denunciations of the ministers, who could not go with them in the 'new measures.' They intruded upon parishes, holding irregular services, urging people not to attend the ministry of their pastors, whom they reviled as unconverted. New England was divided among 'New Lights' and 'Old Lights,' while the Presbyterian Church in the middle colonies was split into 'Old Side' and 'New Side.'¹

¹—Hodge, *History of Presbyterian Church*, Chaps. IV, V; Palfrey, *Compendious History of New England*, IV, 76-107.

The Conversion of Hamilton Wheeler

"To the staid representatives of the Connecticut establishment this assault of excited itinerant and intrusive preachers was a grievous offense. Not only did these preachers embrace every opportunity offered by sympathizers, but they forced themselves into parishes, uninvited and opposed by the settled pastors.

"Among the most troublesome of these itinerants was James Davenport, pastor at Southold, Long Island, in whom the balance of mind was unsettled by the revival excitement.¹ He came into Connecticut with Whitefield in 1740, and again in 1741 alone, preaching at Stratford, Saybrook, and other places, and used most violent language against the ministers and Churches with 'unrestrained liberty of noise and outcry in time of divine service.' A bit of correspondence between Colonel Lynde of Saybrook and Governor Talcott may illustrate the mind of the more sober sort.

"The colonel wrote to the governor complaining of Davenport's conduct at Saybrook, where he had intruded his service in the parish of the Rev. Mr. Hart, whom he had treated with great disrespect. Lynde as a magistrate had thought of prosecuting him, but applied to the governor for advice. The reply of the latter, under date of September 4, 1741, is grave and severe. 'I am surprised,' he wrote, 'that Mr. Davenport should in so imperious and unwarrienable manner take upon him to condemn any, and Especially our most Eminently pious and Industrious Ministers, to be Carnall, etc., which I look upon as usurping the authority of the Most High. And his advice to people not to hearken to their Ministers by him condemned, but to go 10 or 20 miles, and that they had better sett upon private meetings amongst themselves, etc.; all which is a violation and open contempt of the Laws of this Colony, and so apparently tends to the breach of the peace of our Religious Societies and subversion of all good orders in Church and State.' The governor then called on ministers, people, and magistrates to 'use all their Joynt Interest by advice, Influence, and authority, to Incourage what is vertuous and praiseworthy, and to suppress every disorderly and Vile practice and whatsoever tends to the hurt and Reproach of Religion.'

"So great had the trouble become in a large portion of the colony, that in the fall session of 1741 the assembly summoned the general association of ministers to meet at Guilford in the following November to devise a remedy, 'hoping

¹ Talcott Papers; Connecticut Historical Collection V, 370.

The Conversion of Hamilton Wheeler

that such a general convention may issue in the accommodation of divisions, settling peace, love, and charity, and promoting the true interests of vital religion."¹ The convention met accordingly, and after discussion found the root of the trouble in the unwarranted intrusion of itinerant preachers into parishes, and recommended to the legislature measures to correct that evil. This advice was adopted by the general court, which at its next session, 1742, passed an 'Act for regulating Abuses and correcting Disorders in Ecclesiastical Affairs.'²

"One of the preachers sent out of the colony was Davenport, who had had similar treatment at Boston. Complaints of his conduct at Stratford had been lodged with the court. He was summoned to appear before that body, whose deliverance, after examination, ran: 'That the acts of Davenport do, and have a natural tendency to, disturb and destroy the peace and order of this government. Yet it further appears to this Assembly that the said Davenport is under the influence of enthusiastical impressions and impulses, and thereby disturbed in the rational faculty of his mind, and therefore to be pitied and compassionated, and not to be treated as he otherwise might be.' With this opinion, the assembly ordered his transportation to his home at Southold."³

We observe that not only James Davenport, but those evangelists in general who conducted the revival campaign known as the "Great Awakening," were recognized disturbers of church peace in New England. To quote from Cobb, *ibid*, p. 235:

"The Great Awakening of 1741 came as a disturber of the quiet order of the Churches. It was not only a quickening of the religious life, but a protest against the low views of requirements for Church membership introduced by the Half-Way Covenant, to which the great majority of the Churches had fallen victims. It was attended by much excitement and many intrusions into parishes by unauthorized ministers, to the great offence of many of the established clergy."⁴ A result of the revival was seen in the secession of members from the regular Churches, who organized Churches of their own, and for that reason were called Separates."

1 Massachusetts: Records VIII, 440.

2 *Ibid*, VIII, 454.

3 *Ibid*, VIII, 483. Davenport had previously been tried in Massachusetts and sent out of the colony. Palfrey, *op. cit.*

4 Palfrey, *ibid*, IV, 79-100.

The Conversion of Hamilton Wheeler

APPENDIX E

We append a quotation from "The Communistic Societies of the United States," by Charles Nordhoff, showing first, page 119, the origin of the Shakers from a religious revival, which was followed by delusional manifestations:

"About the year 1747, some members of the Society of Quakers, under the influence of a religious revival, formed themselves into a society, at the head of which was a pious couple, Jane and James Wardley. To these people Ann Lee and her parents joined themselves in 1758, Ann being then twenty-three years of age and unmarried. These people suffered persecution from the ungodly, and some of them were even cast into prison, on account of certain unusual and violent manifestations of religious fervor, which caused them to receive the name of 'Shaking Quakers'; and it was while Ann Lee thus lay in jail, in the summer of 1770, that 'by a special manifestation of divine light the present testimony of salvation and eternal life was fully revealed to her,' and by her to the society, 'by whom she from that time was acknowledged as *mother* in Christ, and by them was called *Mother Ann*.* She saw the Lord Jesus Christ in his glory, who revealed to her the great object of her prayers, and fully satisfied all the desires of her soul. The most astonishing visions and divine manifestations were presented to her view in so clear and striking a manner that the whole spiritual world seemed displayed before her."

From page 158 we quote an interview on accessions to membership with Elder Frederick W. Evans, the head of the Mt. Lebanon Colony: "Religious revivals he regarded as 'the hot-beds of Shakerism': they always gain members after a 'revival' in any part of the country. 'Our proper dependence for increase is on the spirit and gift of God working outside. Hence we are friendly to all religious people.'"

From page 131 we quote Nordhoff on accessions from the great Kentucky revival of 1800, resulting in the establishment of new colonies:

"Meantime, in the first year of this century broke out in Kentucky a remarkable religious excitement, lasting several years, and attended with extraordinary and in some cases horrible physical demonstrations. Camp-meetings were held in different counties, to which people flocked by thousands; and here men and women, and even small children, fell down

*F. W. EVANS, *Shakers' Compendium of the Origin, History, etc., with Biographies of Ann Lee, etc.* 1859.

The Conversion of Hamilton Wheeler

in convulsions, foamed at the mouth and uttered loud cries. 'At first they were taken with an inward throbbing of the heart; then with weeping and trembling; from that to crying out in apparent agony of soul; falling down and swooning away, until every appearance of animal life was suspended, and the person appeared to be in a trance.' 'They lie as though they were dead for some time, without pulse or breath, some longer, some shorter time. Some rise with joy and triumph, others crying for mercy.' 'To these encampments the people flocked by hundreds and thousands—on foot, on horseback, and in wagons and other carriages.' At Cabin Creek, in May, 1801, a 'great number fell on the third night; and to prevent their being trodden under foot by the multitude, they were collected together and laid out in order in two squares of the meeting-house; which, like so many dead corpses, covered a considerable part of the floor. At Concord, in Bourbon County, in June, 1801, 'no sex or color, class or description, were exempted from the pervading influence of the Spirit; even from the age of eight months to sixty years.' In August, at Cane Ridge, in Bourbon County, 'about twenty thousand people' were gathered; and 'about three thousand' suffered from what was called 'the falling exercise.' These brief extracts are from the account of an eye-witness, and one who believed these manifestations to be of divine origin.* The accuracy of McNemar's descriptions is beyond question. His account is confirmed by other writers of the time.

"Hearing of these extraordinary events, the Shakers at New Lebanon sent out three of their number—John Meacham, Benjamin S. Youngs, and Issachar Bates—to 'open the testimony of salvation to the people, provided they were in a situation to receive it.' They set out on New-Year's day, 1805, and traveled on foot about a thousand miles, through what was then a sparsely settled country, much of it a wilderness. They made some converts in Ohio and Kentucky, and were, fortunately for themselves, violently opposed and in some cases attacked by bigoted or knavish persons; and with this impetus they were able to found at first five societies, two in Ohio, two in Kentucky, and one in Indiana."

*Richard McNemar, *The Kentucky Revival, or a Short History of the Late Extraordinary Outpouring of the Spirit of God in the Western States of America, etc.* Turtle Hill, Ohio, 1807.

The Conversion of Hamilton Wheeler

It is remarkable that the Shakers, though Spiritualists, rejected the doctrine of the Trinity, the divinity of Jesus, a bodily resurrection, and atonement for sins. Jesus and Ann Lee were simply co-elders of the church. Those converts of evangelical churches who flocked to Shakerism were apparently attracted by their quiet, secluded, and ascetic life. Shattered Revolutionary soldiers were thus brought to them by the revivals following that war, in a manner similar to the revival and camp-meeting harvesting of the wrecked returned soldiers, following the Civil War.



Deacidified using the Bookkeeper process.
Neutralizing agent: Magnesium Oxide
Treatment Date: April 2005

PreservationTechnologies

A WORLD LEADER IN PAPER PRESERVATION

111 Thomson Park Drive
Cranberry Township, PA 16066
(724) 779-2111



LIBRARY OF CONGRESS



0 013 919 717 3

